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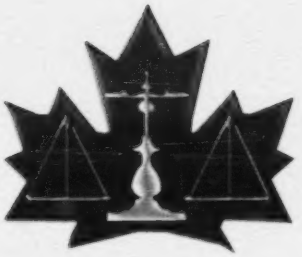
Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2015



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Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

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.. not available for a specific reference period
... not applicable
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0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
^{p} preliminary
^{r} revised
x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
^{E} use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

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Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2015

Introduction

Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile is an annual report produced by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics under the Federal Family Violence Initiative. Since 1998, this report has provided the most current data on the nature and extent of family violence in Canada, as well as analysis of trends over time. The information presented here is used extensively to monitor changes that inform policy makers and the public.

The 2015 edition of the report features an in-depth analysis of self-reported childhood maltreatment in Canada, using data from the 2014 General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization). This featured section examines the nature and prevalence of self-reported childhood physical and sexual abuse in Canada, as well as the issue of children witnessing violence in the home. The analysis is based on adult Canadians' recollections of child abuse they experienced before they turned 15 years of age, and includes incidents that were reported to police as well as those that were not. The featured section also provides analysis of the socio-demographic risk factors linked to child maltreatment and the impacts and consequences it has for victims.

As in past years, this year's report also includes sections dedicated to police-reported data on family violence in general, intimate partner violence specifically, violence against children and youth and violence against seniors. Presented in a fact sheet format accompanied by detailed data tables, these sections provide readers with key findings for 2015 from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and Homicide Survey.

In this report, 'family' refers to relationships defined through blood, marriage, common-law partnership, foster care, or adoption; 'family violence' refers to violent criminal offences where the perpetrator is a family member of the victim, as defined above.

Section 1: Profile of Canadian adults who experienced childhood maltreatment

Section 2: Police-reported family violence in Canada – An overview

Section 3: Police-reported intimate partner violence

Section 4: Police-reported family violence against children and youth

Section 5: Police-reported family violence against seniors

Survey description

Section 1: Profile of Canadian adults who experienced childhood maltreatment

by Marta Burczycka

Highlights

- Findings from the 2014 General Social Survey show that one-third of Canadians aged 15 and older (33%) experienced some form of child maltreatment before age 15. Child maltreatment includes physical and/or sexual abuse by someone aged 18 or older, and/or witnessing violence by a parent or guardian against another adult. Childhood physical abuse was reported by 26% of Canadians, while 8% reported sexual abuse.
- One in ten Canadians (10%) stated that, before age 15, they had witnessed violence by a parent or guardian against another adult in the home. The majority of child witnesses—7 in 10 (70%)—also reported having been the victim of childhood physical and/or sexual assault. Those who witnessed parental violence were more likely to have suffered the most severe forms of physical abuse.
- The majority (65%) of victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse reported having been abused between 1 and 6 times, while 20% reported between 7 and 21 instances. One in seven victims (15%) reported having been abused at least 22 times.
- With respect to the most serious instance of physical abuse that they experienced, the majority of victims indicated that a parent or step-parent was responsible (61%). Childhood sexual abuse, however, was most often perpetrated by someone outside the family (61%).
- More than 9 in 10 (93%) victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse did not report the abuse to either police or child protection services before they turned 15. In fact, the majority of victims (67%) did not speak to anyone, including friends or family.
- Two in every five Aboriginal people (40%) reported having experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, a larger proportion than among non-Aboriginal people (29%). Abuse during childhood was prevalent among Aboriginal women (42%) compared to non-Aboriginal women (27%).
- While a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse was more common among Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal people overall, this was only the case for those aged 30 and older. Among people aged 15 to 29, equal proportions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse.
- Almost half of people aged 15 and older who identified as gay, lesbian and bisexual reported having experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse (48%). This compared to 30% of heterosexual people.
- Those who were physically and/or sexually abused as children were more than twice as likely to have experienced violent victimization as adults during the 12 months preceding the survey (7% versus 3% among non-victims). After controlling for other factors, they were at a higher risk of being the victim of both spousal and non-spousal violence later in life.
- Adult victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse had a higher prevalence of self-reported mental or psychological limitations than non-victims (10% versus 4%), and were more likely to report poor physical health (14% versus 9%).
- Illegal drug use was twice as common among those who reported having experienced physical and/or sexual abuse as children (10% versus 6% of non-victims). Similarly, binge drinking was reported by those who had been abused as children more often than by those who had not been abused (28% versus 25%).
- Very little difference was found between people who had experienced physical and/or sexual abuse as children and those who had not when it came to key socioeconomic elements such as education, employment and income.

Child maltreatment has been identified by some experts as a global public health concern, associated with numerous negative short and long term outcomes for victims as they move through life (United Nations 2006). The negative outcomes of childhood maltreatment are varied and can include poor school performance, delinquency, poor physical and mental health outcomes as well as experiencing further victimization in adulthood (Afifi et al. 2012; Afifi et al. 2014; Afifi et al. 2016; Perreault 2015).

Creating a measure of child maltreatment presents various challenges. Measures based on police-reported data are limited to those incidents that come to the attention of police. Crimes against children may be especially under-reported to police, as children may be unaware of the criminal nature of the acts that they are experiencing, be fearful of the consequences of reporting them to the police, and lack the social supports to make reporting to police seem viable (Finkelhor 2008; Cotter and Beaupré 2014). Conversely, other data sources may be constrained by ethical considerations, which limit the extent to which researchers can gather information on child abuse directly from the children who experience it.

Retrospective reporting of child abuse—that is, adults reporting on their experiences of abuse during their childhood—may address such limitations. In Canada, the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) for the first time included a series of retrospective questions wherein respondents aged 15 and older were asked to report on their experiences of maltreatment during childhood. These questions enable investigation into the nature of child maltreatment in Canada as well as its impact.

Research in the field of childhood maltreatment has identified concerns as to the reliability of retrospective reporting.[1] Asking adults to report on situations that they may have experienced many years earlier can introduce errors of recollection into survey data. However, there is strong evidence to suggest that while recollection errors may indeed impact studies, the effect is more likely to be one of under-reporting (false negatives), as opposed to over-reporting (false positives) (Fergusson et al. 2000). Other studies suggest that recollection errors are fairly consistent between abuse types and victims' sex (Melchert and Parker 1997; Epstein and Bottoms 2002). In this context, child maltreatment data from the 2014 GSS can be seen as a conservative estimate of the extent of child abuse in Canada.

Data from the 2014 GSS allows for analysis of Canadians' experiences of victimization during childhood before age 15, as well as their later experiences with victimization, justice system involvement, community belonging and other aspects of adult life. An examination of broader demographic characteristics (e.g. gender, Aboriginal identity) can help identify who is most at risk for child maltreatment, allowing for more tailored intervention strategies; they can also provide insight into the complex sets of experiences marginalized adults may have in their personal histories, opening the door to more nuanced approaches to treatment and support. Analysis of childhood maltreatment may also help those involved in both policy and social service delivery to address the cycle of violence.

Defining child maltreatment

Globally, definitions of what constitutes child maltreatment vary in scope. The World Health Organization defines child maltreatment as:

"abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age [and] includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation[.] Exposure to intimate partner violence is also sometimes included as a form of child maltreatment" (World Health Organization 2010).

The 2014 GSS asked respondents about their experiences with three forms of childhood maltreatment. First, respondents were asked whether they had been the victim of a physical assault by an adult before they turned 15 years of age—that is, whether they had been slapped, hit, hit with something, pushed, grabbed, shoved, kicked, bitten, punched, choked, burned or otherwise physically attacked by an adult (a person aged 18 years or older).[2]

Second, respondents were asked if they had been sexually assaulted before age 15—that is, whether an adult had forced them, or attempted to force them, into sexual activity by holding them down, threatening or hurting them in some way, and whether they had been touched in a sexual way by an adult against their will (including anything from unwanted touching or grabbing to kissing or fondling).

Third, respondents were asked about witnessing violence: whether or not they had seen or heard their parents, step-parents or guardians hit one another or another adult in the home.[3] Considerable research indicates that witnessing violence can have similar negative impacts as physical or sexual abuse during childhood (for example, see Wolfe et al. 2003). Many in the fields of child protection research and prevention consider exposure to intimate partner violence through witnessing parental abuse to be a warning sign that a child might themselves be a victim of violence (Edleson 1999; Osofsky 2003). In Canada, most provinces and territories include witnessing violence as grounds for intervention under provincial/territorial child protection legislation.[4] Findings in the present report suggest that many victims both witnessed violence and were subject to physical and/or sexual violence as children.

Three in ten Canadians report maltreatment during childhood

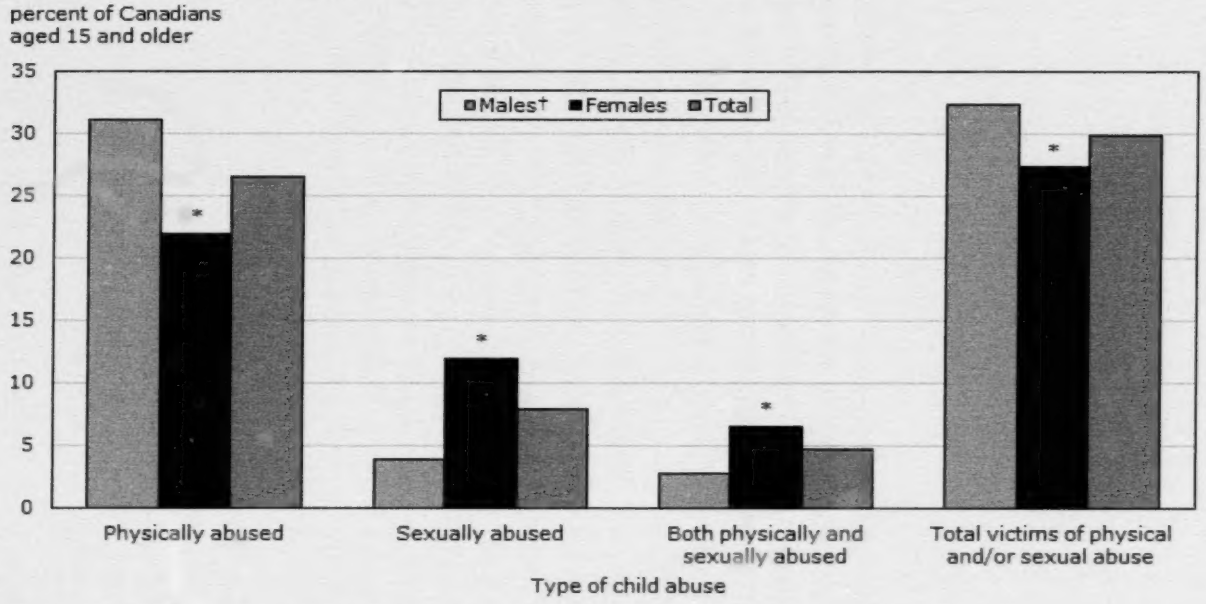
In this report, childhood maltreatment is defined as physical or sexual abuse by an adult or witnessing violence by a parent or guardian against another adult in the home before age 15. According to the 2014 GSS, one-third (33%) of Canadians aged 15 and older reported having experienced at least one of these types of maltreatment as children, equivalent to almost 10 million people (Table 1.1).

Overall, childhood maltreatment was reported by males (35%) more often than females (31%). This finding mirrors previous North American research, which has consistently shown that males are at a greater overall risk for child maltreatment (Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman 1994; Finkelhor et al. 2013).

Physical abuse during childhood is the most common form of child maltreatment, with one-quarter (26%) of Canadians reporting having been physically abused during childhood. Males reported this type of abuse more often than females (31% versus 22%).

Childhood sexual abuse was reported by 8% of Canadians. Females were much more likely to report this type of child maltreatment, with proportions three times greater than among males (12% versus 4%) (Chart 1.1).

Chart 1.1
Self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014



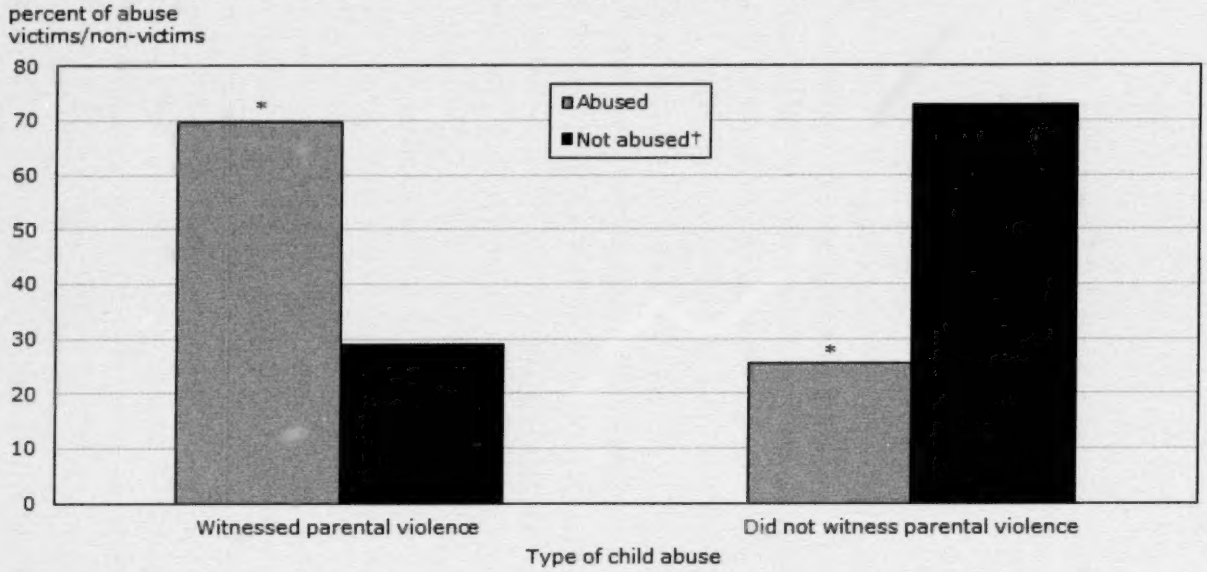
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Of all victims of childhood physical and/or sexual violence, 16% reported that they had been subjected to both types of abuse during childhood. Female victims were three times as likely as males to report having suffered both kinds of victimization (24% of female victims compared to 8% of male victims).

Children who witness violence by a parent or guardian also typically victims of physical, sexual abuse

One-tenth of Canadians (10%) stated that they had witnessed violence by a parent or guardian against another adult in the home. Men and women were equally likely to have experienced this kind of maltreatment during their childhood. The majority of adults who witnessed violence as children—7 in 10 (70%)—also reported having been a victim of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse (Chart 1.2).

Chart 1.2
Self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse and witnessing violence by a parent or guardian against another adult, Canada, 2014



* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' to all questions regarding childhood physical or sexual abuse and/or all questions regarding witnessing violence as a child are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

While research has linked children's witnessing of abuse to many negative outcomes, such as depression, behavioural problems, post-traumatic stress disorder and others, it has also suggested that negative effects are compounded when a child is both a witness to violence between adults and a victim of abuse (for example, see Nixon et al. 2007). Understanding that children who witness abuse are often abuse victims can also inform police practices when responding to intimate partner violence, such as the development of procedures for reporting violence between adults to local child protection services (Dudley 2015).

Physical abuse by a parent reported alongside witnessing parental violence against others

Among child witnesses who had themselves been physically abused as children, almost three-quarters (73%) stated that their parent or step-parent had been the one responsible for the most severe incident of childhood physical abuse. In contrast, those who had not witnessed their parent or guardian be violent towards another adult were less likely to report that a parent or guardian had been the one who had physically abused them (in the most serious incident) (58%).

Results from the 2014 GSS show that those who witnessed violence by a parent or guardian against another adult were also more likely to have experienced the most severe forms of both physical and sexual abuse. Specifically, the most severe forms of physical abuse—having been kicked, bitten, punched, choked, burned or otherwise attacked—were experienced by significantly more victims who had also witnessed parental violence (44%, compared to 20% of victims who had not witnessed violence).

Similarly, victims of childhood sexual abuse who also witnessed parental violence against another adult more often reported the most severe forms of childhood sexual abuse, compared to those victims who had not witnessed parental violence. Among childhood sexual abuse victims, 64% of those who had also witnessed violence by a parent or guardian reported having been forced into unwanted sexual activity by being threatened, held down or hurt, compared to 49% of child sexual abuse victims who had not witnessed parental violence.

One in seven victims report frequent instances of abuse during childhood

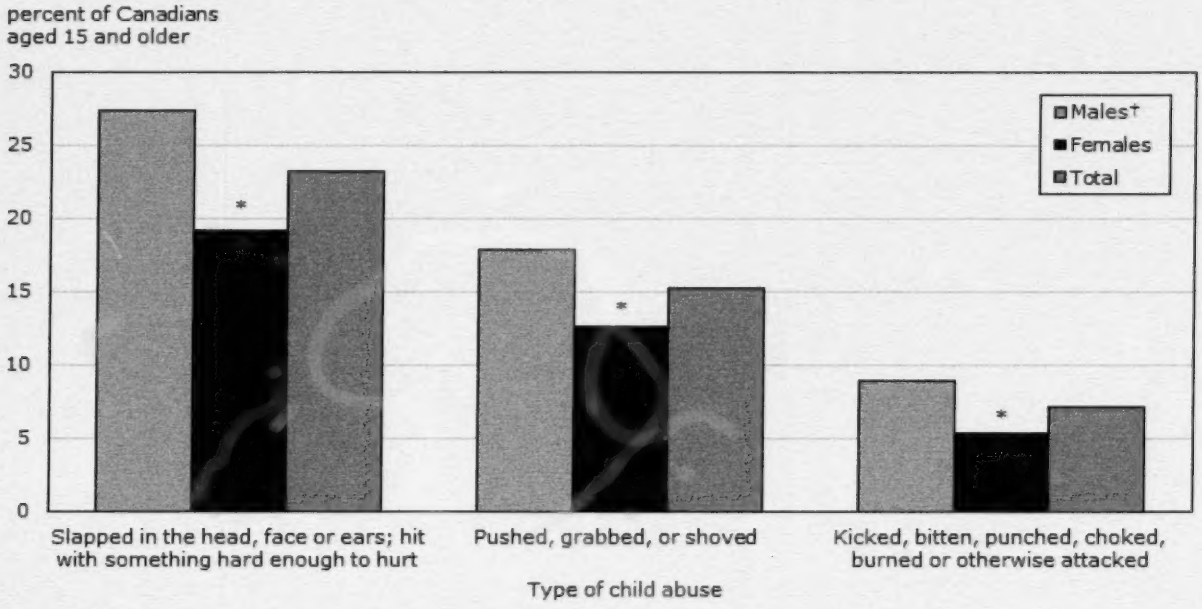
For each type of childhood maltreatment measured through the GSS, respondents were asked to indicate the range of times each type of abuse occurred: once or twice, three to five times, six to ten times, or 11 times or more. The resulting ranges were grouped so that the overall frequencies of instances of abuse can be analyzed.[5] According to the 2014 GSS, 15% of Canadians aged 15 and older who reported that they had been physically and/or sexually abused as children indicated that they had suffered at least 22 instances of abuse before they turned 15.[6] Females were somewhat more likely to report this higher frequency of abuse than males (16% versus 14%).

One-fifth (20%) of victims reported between 7 and 21 incidents, with slightly more males than females falling into this range (21% versus 19%). The majority of victims reported that they had experienced between one and six instances (65%), with no significant difference between males and females (Table 1.2).

Males almost twice as likely as females to report most severe childhood physical abuse

Of the three different types of childhood physical abuse measured by the GSS, having been slapped or hit with something hard enough to have been hurt was the kind most often reported (23% of Canadians). As with childhood physical abuse overall, males were more likely than females to report having suffered this type of violence (27% versus 19%) (Chart 1.3).

Chart 1.3
Types of self-reported childhood physical abuse, Canada, 2014



* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

The second most frequently-reported type of childhood physical abuse was having been pushed, grabbed, or shoved by an adult (15% of Canadians). Again, males (18%) were more likely than females (13%) to report having experienced this as a child.

The most severe forms of childhood physical abuse, including having been kicked, bitten, punched, choked, burned or otherwise attacked, were reported by 7% of Canadians. Males (9%) were almost twice as likely as females (5%) to report having experienced this category of violence.

Most childhood physical abuse committed by parents, step-parents

For six in ten (61%) victims of childhood physical violence, a parent or step-parent was identified as the abuser in the most serious incident of abuse. While this held true for both male and female victims, a parent or step-parent was significantly

more likely to be involved in incidents involving females (71%, compared to 54% of male victims). Female victims were also more likely to identify another adult family member, such as an adult sibling or a grandparent, as the perpetrator of the most serious incident of physical abuse (11% versus 8% of male victims) (Table 1.3).

Males more likely than females to be physically abused by people outside the family

Childhood physical abuse by a person outside of the family was more common for males than for females. In particular, male victims were more than three times more likely to indicate that a teacher, tutor or professor had been responsible for the most serious incident they experienced (14%),[7] compared to 4% of female victims. It was also more common for males to report that the most serious incident of physical abuse had been committed by an adult aged 18 or older who was a friend, current or former boyfriend or girlfriend, acquaintance, neighbour or classmate (10% of male victims versus 6% of females) or by a stranger (7% versus 2%) (Table 1.3).[8]

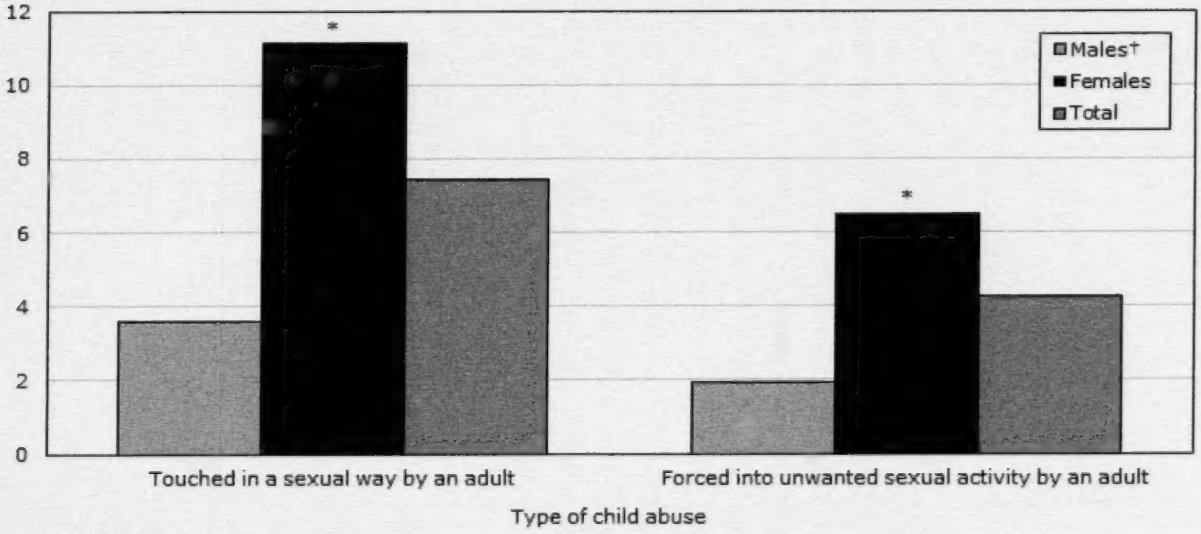
Victims who reported that an adult relative was responsible for the most severe instance of childhood physical abuse were also more likely to report higher frequencies of abuse. Specifically, 16% of those that had been physically abused by an adult family member reported that they had suffered at least 22 separate instances of abuse.[9] In comparison, 9% of those who said that an unrelated adult was responsible for the most serious act of physical abuse indicated that the abuse had occurred a minimum of 22 times. These proportions were similar among male and female victims.

Females three times more likely than males to experience childhood sexual abuse

According to the 2014 GSS, almost one in ten (8%) Canadians reported that before age 15 they were the victim of sexual abuse by an adult, including being touched, grabbed, kissed or fondled in a sexual way as well as being forced into unwanted sexual activity by being threatened, held down or hurt. Females were three times more likely than males to report having been victimized sexually before the age of 15 (12% versus 4%) (Table 1.1).

The most severe form of childhood sexual abuse—being forced into unwanted sexual activity by being threatened, held down or hurt—was reported by 4% of Canadians. As with childhood sexual abuse overall, females were three times more likely than males to report having experienced this kind of victimization (6% compared to 2%, respectively). Being touched, grabbed, kissed or fondled in a sexual way by an adult before age 15 was reported by 7% of Canadians. More than one in ten females (11%) reported having been abused this way as a child, along with 4% of males (Chart 1.4).

Chart 1.4
Types of self-reported childhood sexual abuse, Canada, 2014



* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

When it came to childhood sexual abuse, most victims (80%) reported that the abuse had occurred between one and six times. Frequencies of 7 to 21 instances and 22 instances or more were each reported by 10% of victims. Overall, females were more likely to report higher frequencies of sexual abuse and less likely to report lower frequencies (Table 1.2).[10]

Childhood sexual abuse most often perpetrated by an adult outside of the family

In contrast to childhood physical abuse, about six in ten victims of childhood sexual abuse indicated that the most serious incident of abuse that they suffered had been committed by an adult outside of their family. A contrast was found, however, between male and female victims. More than four out of five male victims of sexual abuse before age 15 reported that an adult non-family member was responsible for the abuse. This proportion was considerably smaller among female victims (54%) (Table 1.3).

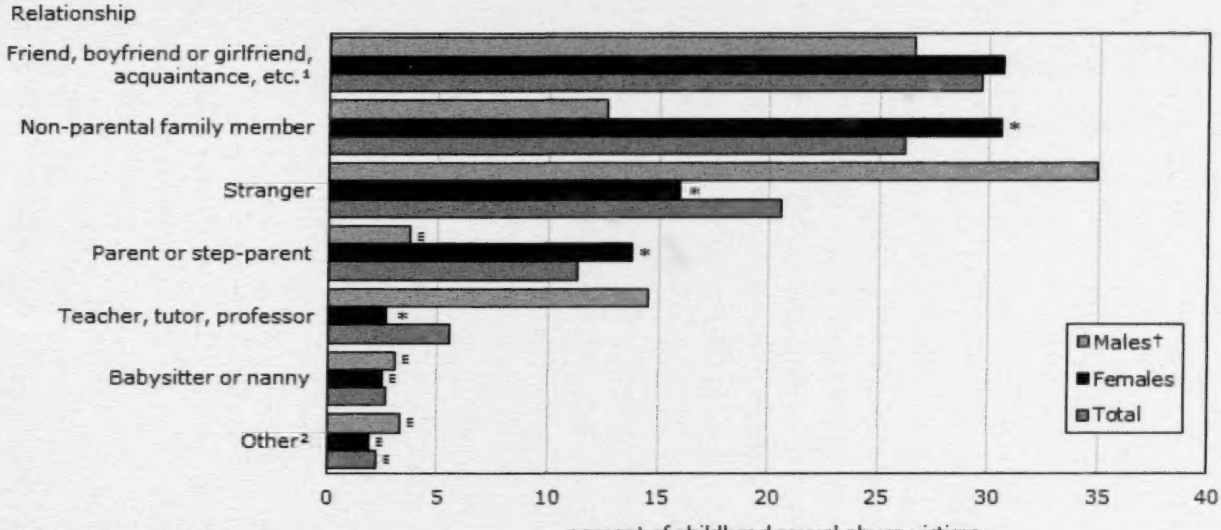
Most often, when asked about the most serious incident of sexual abuse endured as children, male victims reported that the abuse had been committed by a stranger (35%). Females reported victimization by strangers about half as often (16%). Males were proportionally five times more likely to have been abused by a teacher, tutor or professor (15%) than females (3%).

Females more likely than males to be sexually abused by adult family members

According to police-reported statistics on family violence, between 2009 and 2014 rates of family-perpetrated sexual assaults against female children and youth were consistently more than four times higher than those against males (Ibrahim and Karam 2016). These findings are supported by self-reported data collected by the GSS. According to the 2014 GSS, female victims of childhood sexual abuse were much more likely to have been victimized by a family member than male victims, when asked about the most serious incident perpetrated by an adult that they had experienced (44% of female victims compared to 16% of males).

In particular, females most often indicated that the abuser had been an adult non-parental family member such as grandparent, sibling or other relation (31%). A smaller proportion reported sexual abuse by a parent or step-parent (14%). In contrast, fewer male victims were abused by non-parental family members (13%) or parents or step-parents (4%[E]) (Chart 1.5).

Chart 1.5
Relationship of self-reported childhood sexual abuse victims to their abusers, Canada, 2014



E use with caution
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Also includes neighbours, classmates and persons known to the victim only by sight.
2. Includes health practitioners, boarders, employers, and other relationships not otherwise specified.
Note: Includes the relationship between the victim and the person responsible for the most severe instance of abuse. Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

As with physical abuse, victims reporting that a family member was responsible for the most serious incident of childhood sexual abuse were more likely to report higher frequencies of abuse. Among those who said a relative had committed the most serious incident of sexual abuse that they had suffered as a child, 18% reported a minimum of 22 separate instances.[11] This compares to those who reported that a non-relative was responsible for the most serious incident, among whom 4%[E] reported experiencing at least 22 instances of sexual abuse. These differences reflect the experiences of female victims, as no significant differences were found between males abused by a relative and males abused by a non-relative when it came to the minimum frequency of abuse.

Few victims spoke to police or child protection services about abuse

While previous Canadian studies have recognized the large volume of child abuse and neglect cases investigated by child protection services (Public Health Agency of Canada 2010), researchers in the field of child maltreatment have long cautioned that the physical and sexual abuse of children is underreported to authorities (Finkelhor et al. 2001). Children may be afraid or unable to contact authorities, may have limited social supports, and may not understand that some of the things happening to them are criminal (United Nations 2006; Ogrodnik 2010; Kuoppamäki et al. 2011). Further, research has shown that incidents of childhood sexual abuse in particular are more often unreported until adulthood, compared with other types of police-reported crime (Cotter and Beaupré 2014).

Consistent with findings from other studies, results from the 2014 GSS show that the vast majority of childhood physical and sexual abuse experienced by Canadians aged 15 and older before they turned 15 went unreported to authorities.[12] Among those who experienced physical and/or sexual violence as a child, 93% indicated that before they turned 15 they had not seen nor spoken to either the police or child protection services about the abuse. Specifically, 1 in 20 (5%) victims spoke to or saw police about the abuse, and 3% spoke to or saw someone from child protection services. Females were more likely than males to report both having had contact with the police (7% versus 4%) and/or speaking to child protection services (4% versus 2%[E]) about the abuse.

About one in six (16%) victims who experienced both childhood physical and sexual abuse spoke to police or child protection services. In comparison, victims who had experienced one type of abuse exclusively were less likely to have spoken to authorities. Less than one in ten (9%) victims who experienced exclusively sexual abuse and 4% of victims of exclusively physical abuse spoke to police or child protection services before they turned 15.[13]

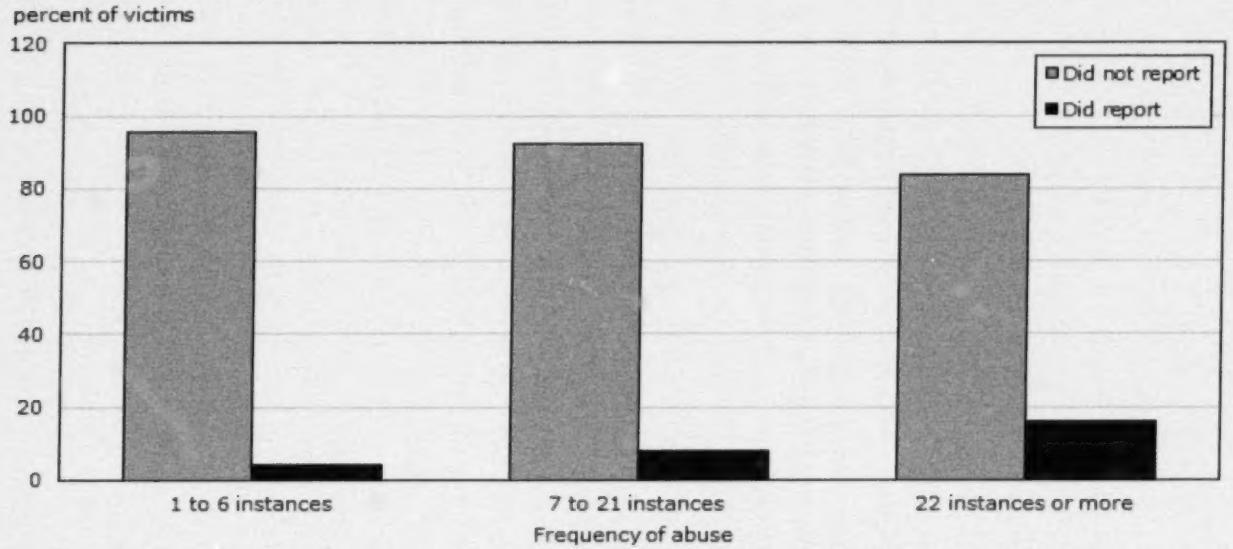
Victims who had experienced the most severe forms of physical and/or sexual abuse were more likely to have spoken to police or child protection services before they turned 15.[14] For instance, 19% of those who had been forced into unwanted sexual activity by an adult who had held them down, threatened them or otherwise hurt them, had spoken to authorities. In comparison, 7% of victims who had been slapped on the face, head or ears or hit with something hard enough to hurt by an adult reported having spoken to police or child protection services.

Having spoken to authorities about the abuse they were experiencing was more common among victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse who had also witnessed parental violence. More than one in ten (11%) victims who also witnessed a parent or guardian commit violence against another adult in the home indicated that they had spoken to police or child protection services before they turned 15. This was almost twice as many as among those who had been abused as children, but who had not witnessed parental violence (6%).

Victims of multiple instances of child abuse more likely to turn to authorities

Having spoken to police or child protection services about the abuse was more common among those victims who reported higher frequencies of abuse. Overall, in the provinces, 7% of victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse reported having spoken to police or child protection services before age 15. Among those who experienced a minimum of 22 instances of abuse, however, the proportion who spoke to authorities was more than double (16%)[15] (Chart 1.6).

Chart 1.6
Reporting to police or child protective services among victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by frequency of abuse, Canada, 2014



Note: Excludes respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refusal' to any of the childhood physical and sexual abuse questions (approximately 4% of respondents) as well as respondents in the territories.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

The relationship between abusers and victims of childhood physical and sexual abuse did not have an impact on the likelihood of victims speaking to police or child protection services about their experiences.

Most child victims did not speak to anyone about abuse

Those who reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were asked if, before age 15, they had spoken with anyone besides police and child protection services about the abuse. Although victims were more likely to have spoken to family or friends, for example, than to police or child protection services, the majority of victims (67%) indicated that they did not speak to any of these more informal sources of help and support. Men were more likely to report that they had not spoken to others about their abuse (72%) than women (62%) (Table 1.4).

Among victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, just under one-quarter (23%) reported speaking to family members about the abuse. Speaking to family members was more common among female abuse victims (26%) than among males (20%). Some victims also spoke with friends about the abuse they were experiencing (10%). Again, females were more likely than males to discuss abuse with their friends (12% versus 9%).

Very few victims spoke with a teacher or a doctor or nurse (2% respectively) or a religious or spiritual advisor (1%[E]).

Few victims of child abuse report being in government care

Very few people who were subjected to physical and/or sexual abuse before age 15 reported having been the legal responsibility of the government at some point during their childhood (4%). This proportion was somewhat higher among those who had suffered childhood sexual abuse (7%). Meanwhile, 1% of people who had no history of physical and/or sexual abuse in childhood reported having been in government care.

History of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse more common among Aboriginal people, especially women

In Canada, Aboriginal people are at a higher risk of many forms of victimization compared to the non-Aboriginal population (Boyce 2016). Findings from the 2014 GSS on Victimization suggest that the prevalence of childhood physical and sexual abuse is also higher among Aboriginal people. For successive generations of Aboriginal people, experiences of childhood

physical and sexual abuse have been tied to the repercussions of Canada's residential schools, also known as intergenerational trauma (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015).

Two out of every five Aboriginal people in Canada (40%) reported having been the victim of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an adult before they turned 15. This proportion was significantly higher than that recorded among non-Aboriginal people, among whom 29% reported one or both of these forms of childhood maltreatment (Table 1.5).

Statistically, Aboriginal women (42%) and Aboriginal men (39%) were equally as likely to report having experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse. This is notably different from the non-Aboriginal population, where males were more likely than females to have been abused as children.

Differences in childhood victimization were especially pronounced between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal females. More than two in five (42%) Aboriginal women over the age of 15 reported having been physically and/or sexually abused during childhood, compared to 27% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Among males, this difference was smaller: 39% among Aboriginal men, compared to 32% among their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

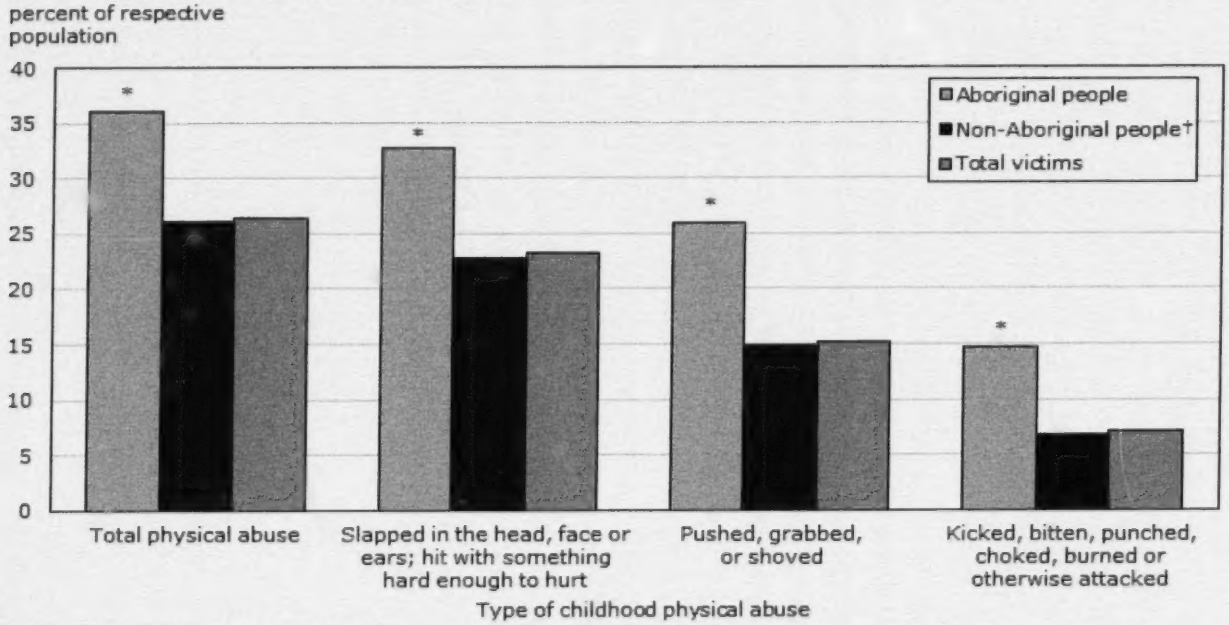
Higher frequency of childhood physical abuse reported among Aboriginal people

Specifically, physical violence during childhood was more prevalent among Aboriginal people (36%, compared to 26% among non-Aboriginal people). Both Aboriginal men and Aboriginal women reported higher proportions of childhood physical abuse than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (37% versus 31% among men, 35% versus 21% among women).

In addition to a higher overall prevalence of childhood physical abuse, Aboriginal people were also more likely to report more instances of childhood physical abuse. Close to three in ten (29%) Aboriginal people reported that they had experienced a minimum of 22 instances of physical abuse as children.[16] This was more than double the proportion among non-Aboriginal people (14%).

While Aboriginal people were more likely to report having experienced each type of physical child abuse measured by the GSS, they were over twice as likely as non-Aboriginal people to report the most severe forms of physical violence before age 15 (having been kicked, bitten, punched, choked, burned or otherwise attacked)—15% compared to 7% (Chart 1.7).

Chart 1.7
Victims of self-reported childhood physical abuse, by type of abuse and Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2014



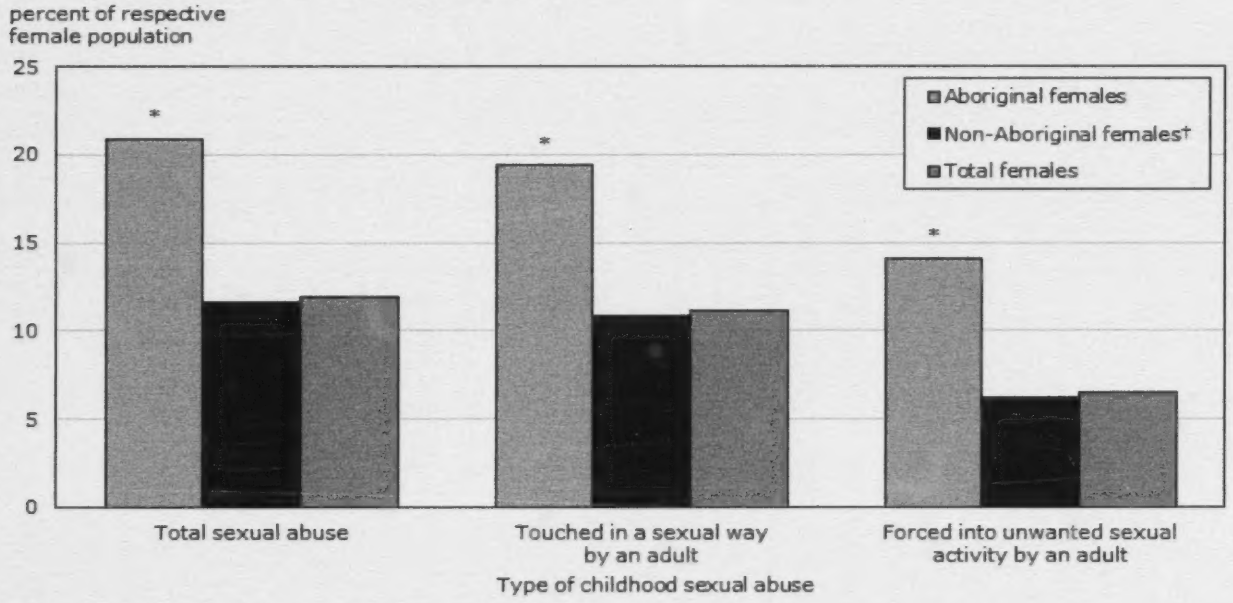
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

One in five Aboriginal females experienced childhood sexual abuse

Sexual victimization by an adult before age 15 was more common among Aboriginal people (13%) than non-Aboriginal people (8%). Childhood sexual abuse was most prevalent among Aboriginal females, among whom over one in five reported this kind of abuse (21%, compared to 12% among non-Aboriginal females). As well, more Aboriginal men suffered childhood sexual abuse than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (7%[E] versus 4%).

Looking at the most severe form of childhood sexual abuse—being forced into unwanted sexual activity by an adult through being threatened, held down or hurt in some way—the proportions of victims reporting this kind of abuse were larger among Aboriginal people (9%) than non-Aboriginal people (4%). Moreover, the proportion of Aboriginal women who had been victimized in this way was significantly larger than that of non-Aboriginal women (14% compared to 6%) (Chart 1.8). However, no significant difference was detected between proportions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men (4% and 2%, respectively). In addition to the severity of childhood sexual abuse, its frequency was similar for Aboriginal people and their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Chart 1.8
Female victims of self-reported childhood sexual abuse, by type of abuse and Aboriginal identity, Canada, 2014



* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

More Aboriginal people experienced both sexual and physical abuse as children

Experiencing both physical and sexual violence during childhood was more common among Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal people in Canada. Almost one in ten (9%) Aboriginal people reported having experienced both forms of abuse before they turned 15, a proportion more than double that of non-Aboriginal people (4%). Aboriginal women were more than twice as likely as their non-Aboriginal counterparts to report having suffered both of these forms of violence in childhood (14% versus 6%). Aboriginal men were also more likely to have experienced both physical and sexual abuse than were non-Aboriginal men (5%[E] versus 3%).

Looking at the most severe instance of childhood physical abuse that they experienced, most Aboriginal victims (74%) indicated that a family member was the perpetrator. For childhood sexual abuse, 54% of Aboriginal victims implicated someone other than a relative. These proportions were not statistically different from those reported by non-Aboriginal victims.

Aboriginal people were more likely to report that as a child they witnessed violence committed by a parent or guardian against another adult. The likelihood of witnessing this kind of violence was twice as great among Aboriginal people (21%) than non-Aboriginal people (10%). Aboriginal men and women were equally as likely to have witnessed parental violence in their home.

Aboriginal victims of childhood abuse more likely to have spoken to authorities, been in government care

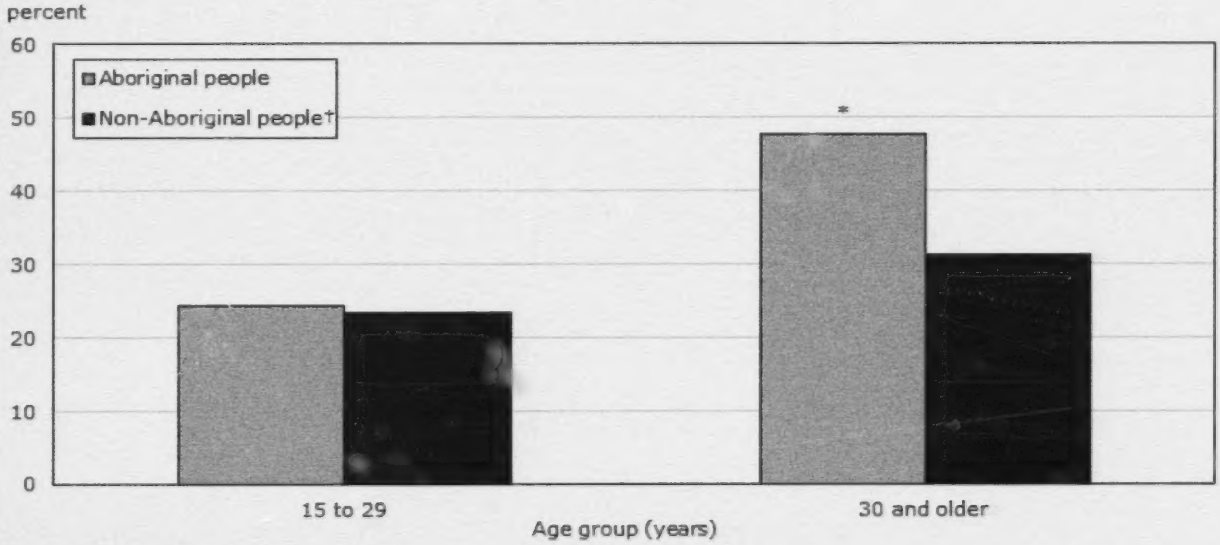
Previous research into victimization among the Aboriginal population in Canada has found that Aboriginal people victimized as adults are less likely than their non-Aboriginal counterparts to have reported their victimization to the police (Boyce 2016). In contrast, data from the 2014 GSS show that when it came to abuse during childhood, it was more common for Aboriginal people[17] to have spoken with police or child protection services before they turned 15, compared to non-Aboriginal victims. In fact, the proportion of Aboriginal victims who spoke to authorities was almost double that of non-Aboriginal victims: 13%[E] compared to 7%, respectively.

Having been in government care was significantly more common among Aboriginal people who had been physically and/or sexually abused before age 15 than among non-Aboriginal victims.[18] Among Aboriginal victims, 14%[E] reported that they had been the legal responsibility of the government at some point during their childhood, compared to 3% of non-Aboriginal victims. The over-representation of Aboriginal children in residential and non-residential government care has been documented by Canadian research based on the 1998 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Maltreatment (Trocmé et al. 2004).

Text box 1
Prevalence, severity and frequency of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse among Aboriginal people of differing age groups

Overall, the prevalence of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse is higher among Aboriginal people than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. However, this difference was not found among the younger population. Among younger people—that is, those between the ages of 15 to 29—no statistically significant differences were found between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in terms of having suffered physical and/or sexual abuse before the age of 15 (24% and 23%). Instead, differences in the prevalence of child abuse were found only for those aged 30 or above: Aboriginal people in this age group were considerably more likely than their non-Aboriginal counterparts to have been victimized as children (48% versus 31%) (Text box 1 chart).

Text box 1 chart
Self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by Aboriginal identity and age group, Canada, 2014



* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Text box 1 — continued

Prevalence, severity and frequency of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse among Aboriginal people of differing age groups

Of note, when looking specifically at females within the younger segment of the population, no statistically significant differences in the prevalence of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were found between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal females (26%[E] and 23%, respectively). Likewise, no differences were found among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal males in this younger group (23%[E] and 23%). In contrast, among older people, a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse was significantly more common among Aboriginal women—among whom almost half (49%) had experienced abuse as a child—compared to their non-Aboriginal counterparts (28%). Similarly, more Aboriginal men over age 30 reported having been abused as a child (47%), compared to non-Aboriginal men (35%).

When it came to the severity of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse that people experienced, differences between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people were again found solely among individuals aged 30 or older. For example, the most severe form of childhood physical abuse—having been kicked, bitten, punched, choked, burned or otherwise physically attacked by an adult—was reported by 19% of older Aboriginal people. This compared to the 7% of non-Aboriginal people in that age group who had experienced this kind of child abuse. Meanwhile, among younger individuals, the proportion of Aboriginal people who reported this most severe form of childhood physical abuse was too small to be published (Text box 1 table).

Text box 1 table
Types of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by age group and Aboriginal identity, 2014

	Aged 15 to 29		Aged 30 and older	
	Aboriginal people	Non-Aboriginal people†	Aboriginal people	Non-Aboriginal people†
Type of child abuse	percent			
Kicked, bitten, punched, choked, burned or otherwise attacked	F	5	19*	7
Pushed, grabbed, or shoved	15[E]	13	31*	15
Slapped in the head, face or ears; hit with something hard enough to hurt	20[E]	19	39*	24
Forced into unwanted sexual activity by an adult	2[E]	2	11*	5
Touched in a sexual way by an adult	5[E]	3	15*	9

[E] use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Respondents were able to answer 'yes' to more than one type of child abuse. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Similarly, the prevalence of the most severe form of childhood sexual abuse—forced or attempted forced sexual activity through threats, being held down or being hurt in some way—was the same for younger Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (2%[E] and 2%, respectively). Notably, the proportions of younger Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women reporting this kind of abuse were not found to be statistically different (5%[E] and 3% respectively). Among older women, however, the proportion of Aboriginal females who experienced this kind of sexual abuse as children was over two-and-one-half times higher than among their non-Aboriginal counterparts (18% versus 7%).

Among older victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Aboriginal people were at a higher risk of reporting the highest frequencies of abuse—that is, 22 or more instances (29% of Aboriginal victims, compared to 15% of non-Aboriginal victims). These findings were consistent for older males (31% versus 14%) and older females (26% versus 16%). Younger Aboriginal victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were more likely to report the highest frequency of abuse, just like their older counterparts (31%[E] versus 10% among non-Aboriginal people)—even though there was little difference in the overall prevalence of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse.[1]

There was no statistically significant difference between the proportions of younger and older Aboriginal people who reported that they had been in government care at one point during childhood.

1. Analysis looking at frequencies of abuse among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people by sex was not possible, owing to small counts considered too unreliable to be published.

More childhood physical, sexual abuse reported by people identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual

Significantly higher proportions of people who identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual reported having been physically and/or sexually assaulted before age 15, compared to those identifying as heterosexual. Overall, almost half (48%) of those who identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual indicated that they had suffered physical and/or sexual abuse as a child, while abuse was reported by less than a third (30%) of heterosexual people.[19] This held true among both male and female victims (52% compared to 33% among males, and 45% compared to 28% among females) (Table 1.5).

Considerably higher proportions of people identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual reported childhood physical abuse (42% compared to 27% of heterosexual people), with both males and females more likely to report having been abused compared to their heterosexual counterparts. When it came to having experienced childhood sexual abuse, the proportion of victims among the gay, lesbian and bisexual population was more than double that of heterosexual people (19% versus 8%). As with physical abuse before age 15, childhood sexual abuse was more common among both male and female gay, lesbian and bisexual people, when compared to heterosexual people of the same gender.

Those identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual were more likely to have spoken to police or child protection services about childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, compared to their heterosexual counterparts (12%[E] versus 7%). When it came to the relationship between victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse and the person responsible for the most serious incident, no difference was found between victims identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual and their heterosexual counterparts.

The higher prevalence of physical and/or sexual abuse before age 15 among gay, lesbian and bisexual people in Canada echoes findings from American studies. In their comprehensive meta-analysis, Friedman et al. (2011) found that sexual minority individuals were more likely to experience childhood physical and/or sexual abuse. Other studies from the U.S. and Canada suggest that gay, lesbian and bisexual youth are at increased risk of violence within their families and communities, rooted largely in the stigmatizing attitudes that are sometimes present in these environments (Saewyc et al. 2006).

Some types of childhood victimization reported less often by immigrants

Overall, immigrants were slightly less likely than non-immigrants to report a history of physical and/or sexual abuse as children (29% versus 30%). When it came to physical abuse specifically, no differences were found between immigrants and non-immigrants. Conversely, immigrants were less likely to report having experienced childhood sexual abuse (6%, compared to 9% of non-immigrants), a difference reflective of immigrant women reporting this kind of abuse less often (8%) than non-immigrant women (13%) (Table 1.5).

Being related to the person responsible for the most serious incident of child abuse was less common among immigrants. Instead, almost a third (32%) indicated that a non-family member was responsible for the most serious incident of physical abuse, compared to 24% of non-immigrant victims. Similarly, almost three-quarters (73%) of immigrant victims of child sexual abuse indicated that someone outside of their family was responsible for the most serious incident, compared to 58% of non-immigrant victims.

Some studies have suggested that cultural norms within some immigrant communities can influence whether or not victims speak out about the abuse they are experiencing (Fontes and Plummer 2010). Others have suggested that some immigrants may be less likely to access government services, such as those associated with child protection and related social services (Menjívar and Salcido 2002). Some newcomers to Canada may not be aware of the services that are available or face language barriers; others may not perceive the abuse that they are experiencing as something that can or should be addressed by authorities.

According to the 2014 GSS, immigrants were less likely to report having spoken to police or to child protection services about the abuse they had suffered during childhood (5%[E]) compared to non-immigrant victims (8%). Looking at whether or not immigrants who were victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse spoke to family members, friends, teachers or others about the abuse, no significant differences were found compared to individuals born in Canada.

Prevalence of reported childhood sexual abuse lower among visible minorities

Overall, Canadians who belonged to a visible minority group[20] were less likely to have been physically and/or sexually victimized in childhood than those who were not a visible minority (27% compared to 31%). As with immigrant populations, this was driven by the fact that visible minority women were less likely than other women to have been victimized (24% versus 28%).

Virtually no difference was found between the two groups when it came to childhood physical abuse, but those within visible minority groups were significantly less likely to report having been sexually victimized as children (5% compared to 9%

among those who were not visible minorities). This difference was noted among females (8% among visible minorities, 13% among others) but was less pronounced among males (3% versus 4%).

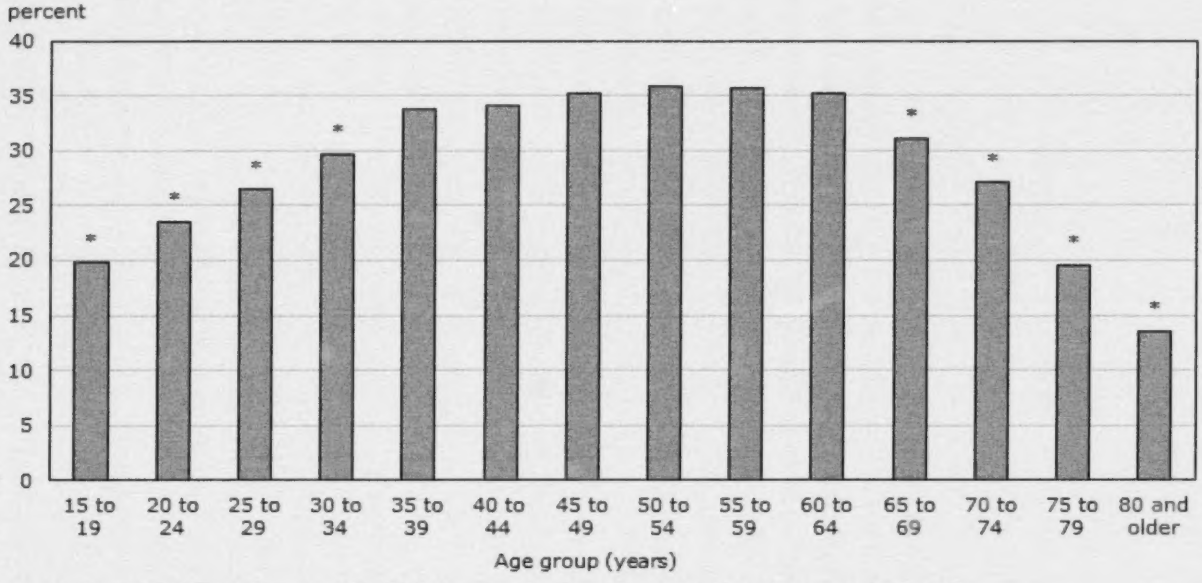
People who identified as a member of a visible minority group were less likely to report that the person who had physically abused them in the most serious incident was a family member (66%), compared to victims who were not a visible minority (71%). This was also the case for victims of childhood sexual abuse (24%, compared to 39% among those who were not a visible minority).[21]

No statistically significant differences between visible minorities and others were found with respect to whether victims had spoken to police or child protection services about the abuse they had suffered.

Canadians aged 35 to 64 years most likely to have experienced childhood victimization

The information reported by victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse to the 2014 GSS did not include their specific ages at the time that they were victimized as children. However, victims' ages at the time that the information was collected (2014) is known. According to the 2014 GSS, a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse was most commonly reported by those between 35 and 64 years of age at the time of the survey. The proportions of people in these age groups who reported a history of abuse ranged from 34% to 36% and were significantly higher than proportions reported by other age groups and by Canadians as a whole (30%) (Chart 1.9).

Chart 1.9
Age distribution of victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014



* significantly different from each individual age group between 35 to 39 and 60 to 64 ($p < 0.05$)
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Violent victimization in adulthood more common among those that experienced child maltreatment

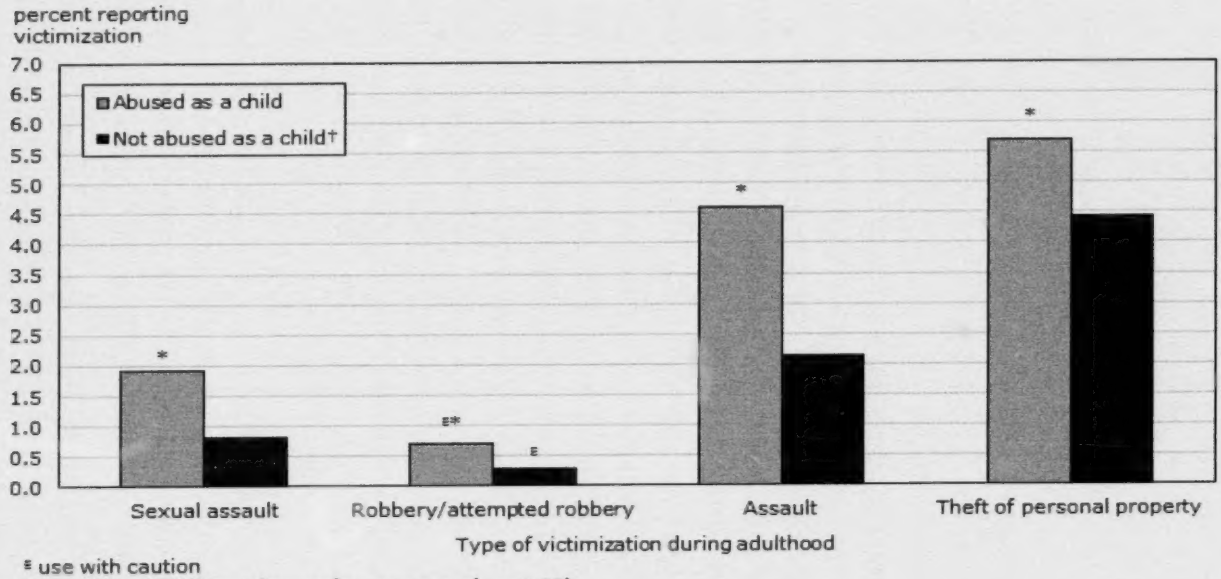
According to the 2014 GSS, Canadians aged 15 and older who reported a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse had a considerably higher prevalence of victimization in the 12 months prior to the survey, compared to those with no history of child abuse. Among those aged 15 and older who had experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, 13% reported that they had suffered some kind of criminal victimization in the previous 12 months—a larger proportion than among those who had not been victimized as children (8%) (Table 1.6).

In particular, the incidence of violent victimization—including crimes such as assault, sexual assault and robbery—during adulthood was more prevalent among victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse. Among child abuse victims, 7%

reported that they had experienced violent victimization (as adults) during the preceding 12 months. This was more than double what was reported by people who had not been abused as children (3%).

Specifically, people who reported having suffered physical and/or sexual abuse before age 15 were significantly more likely than non-victims to have experienced assault (5% versus 2%), sexual assault (2% versus 1%) and theft of personal property (6% versus 4%) as adults in the year preceding the survey (Chart 1.10).

Chart 1.10
Types of self-reported criminal victimization experienced during adulthood, by victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014



E use with caution
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

The higher likelihood of experiencing all types of victimization as an adult during the previous 12 months was true for males as well as for females who had been physically and/or sexually abused as children. The only exception was among males who had experienced theft or attempted theft, where no statistically significant difference was found between those with a history of child abuse and those with no such history.

Text box 2
Child maltreatment and victimization in adulthood

In his study of self-reported adult victimization reported to the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadian's Safety (Victimization), Perreault (2015) utilized multivariate analysis to investigate various risk factors for violent victimization. Factors such as age, drug use, mental health, and childhood maltreatment were probed for possible association with increased risk of having experienced crimes such as assault, sexual assault and robbery during the previous 12 months.

Multivariate analysis showed a clear association between childhood maltreatment and violent victimization. Even when all other risk factors were taken into account, people who had experienced physical and/or sexual abuse as children were at double the risk of violent victimization as adults compared to those who had not been abused.

In addition to respondents' experiences of violent victimization overall, the 2014 GSS also surveyed their experiences of spousal violence—that is, violence committed by a current or former spouse or common-law partner during the five years preceding the survey. Findings showed that in the five years prior to the survey, approximately 189,000 Canadians—one in every one hundred people with current or former spouses or common-law partners—had suffered the most severe forms of spousal violence: being beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or a knife, or forced or manipulated into unwanted sexual activity (Burczycka 2016).

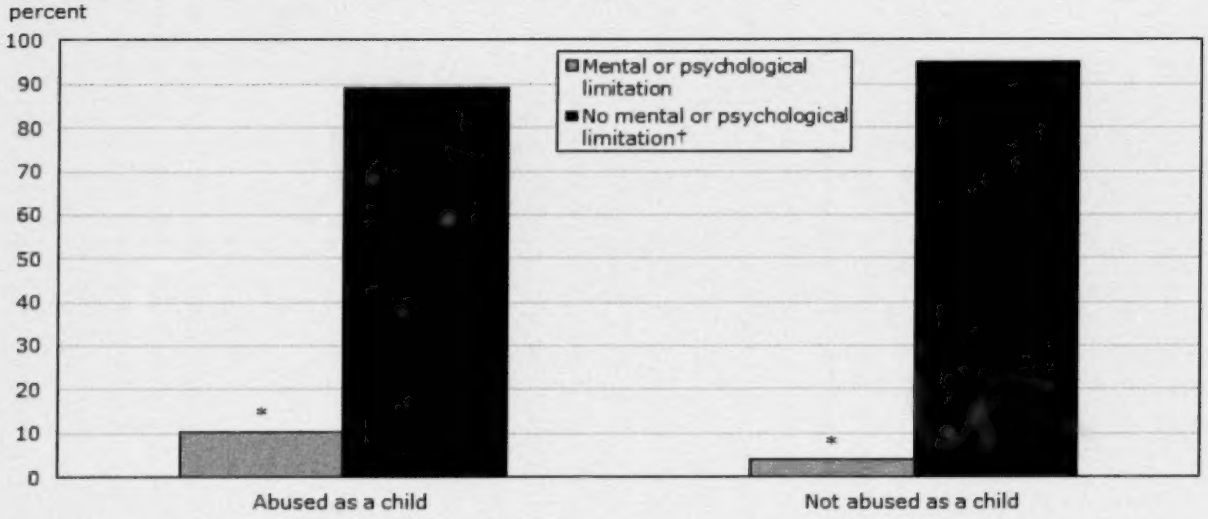
For the present report, characteristics such as Aboriginal identity, physical or mental limitations, drug use, binge drinking, and age were incorporated into a multivariate analysis to investigate a possible association between childhood physical and/or sexual abuse and the most severe forms of spousal violence later in life. Results show a clear association: after these factors were taken into consideration, those with a history of child abuse were at a higher risk for the most severe types of spousal violence.

The frequency with which victims experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse appeared linked to the likelihood of spousal violence. With each additional instance of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, victims' odds of experiencing severe spousal violence during the five years preceding the survey increased by 2%—even when other factors for spousal violence were accounted for. For example, a person who experienced two instances of child abuse was 2% more likely to experience spousal abuse later in life than was someone who was abused once as a child.

One in ten adults abused during childhood report a mental health limitation

The relationship between physical and/or sexual abuse during childhood and poor mental health later in life is well documented. For example, the 2012 Canadian Community Health Survey on Mental Health—which used questions and survey methodology similar to the 2014 GSS—found that "all types of child abuse were associated with all mental conditions ... after adjusting for sociodemographic variables" (Afifi et al. 2014). Findings from the 2014 GSS support this research, showing that one in ten Canadians aged 15 and older (10%) who had experienced physical and/or sexual abuse during childhood reported that they currently have a mental or psychological condition severe enough to limit their daily activities.[22] In contrast, 4% of those with no history of abuse in childhood reported a limiting mental or psychological condition (Chart 1.11, Table 1.7).

Chart 1.11
Self-reported mental or psychological limitations among adult victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014



* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
Note: Data for respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refuse' are not shown, but are included in percent calculations.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Self-reported mental or psychological disability was more common among both male and female victims of childhood physical and/or sexual victimization. It was especially pronounced among females, of whom 14% of those with a history of child abuse reported a mental or psychological limitation compared to 5% of those with no such history. Among males, 7% of those who had been abused as children reported a mental or psychological disability, versus 3% of those who had not been abused.

People who experience criminal victimization as adults are also more likely to report a mental or psychological disability (Perreault 2015). Those who were victimized as both children and as adults during the previous 12 months were especially likely to report mental or psychological limitations (16% compared to 9% who were victimized as adults but not as children, and 4% among those who had experienced neither type of victimization). Moreover, a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse was associated with a mental or psychological disability regardless of whether experiences of victimization as an adult in the past 12 months were reported: people who did not experience the latter were still over twice as likely to report a mental or psychological disability if they had been subjected to childhood physical and/or sexual abuse (9% versus 4%) (Table 1.8).

Illegal drug use, binge drinking more common among those with history of child abuse

The 2014 GSS asked Canadians about whether or not they used non-prescribed drugs such as cannabis,[23] cocaine, ecstasy and others during the preceding month. Results indicate that illegal drug use was more prevalent among those with a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse (10% of victims) than among those who had not been abused (6% of non-victims) (Table 1.7).

More than twice as many females who had been abused in childhood reported illegal drug use in the previous month, compared to those who had not been abused (7% versus 3%). Among males, 13% of those who had been abused as children reported using drugs in the preceding month, compared to 9% of those who had used drugs but not been abused.

People who had been victimized both as children and as adults (in the previous year) were at a particularly high risk of drug use: more than one in five (22%) victims of both kinds of victimization reported drug use during the preceding month (Table 1.8).

More victims of child abuse reported at least one instance of binge drinking—that is, having five or more alcoholic beverages on the same occasion—in the past month, compared to those with no history of child abuse (28% versus 25%). Differences were found only among females: over one in five (21%) female victims reported binge drinking, compared to 17% of women

who had no history of child abuse. Meanwhile, among males, equal proportions of child abuse victims and non-victims reported binge drinking in the previous month (34%). Males were more likely than females to have engaged in binge drinking, regardless of whether or not they had been victimized as children.

One in seven people abused before age 15 report homelessness

People who had been physically and/or sexually abused as children more often reported that at one point in their lives they had been homeless—that is, that they had to live in a shelter, on the street or in an abandoned building, or had to make temporary living arrangements because they had nowhere else to go. About one in seven (15%) child abuse victims reported having been homeless, a proportion more than twice that of those with no history of abuse (6%). Equal proportions of male and female victims of childhood maltreatment reported having experienced homelessness at one point in their lives (Table 1.7).

An increased risk of homelessness was noted among those who experienced physical and/or sexual abuse before age 15, regardless of whether they went on to suffer adult victimization during the preceding 12 months. However, one-quarter (25%) of people who reported victimization as adults during the past year as well as in childhood reported that they had experienced homelessness in their lives. This compares to 13% of people who had been victimized before age 15 but not as adults (Table 1.8).

Adults abused as children report weaker sense of safety, confidence in justice system

A sense of satisfaction with personal safety was slightly weaker among those who had experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, with 86% reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied compared to 90% of non-victims. Both males and females who had been abused as children expressed a weaker sense of personal safety. Overall, victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse who were also victimized as adults were least likely to report high levels of satisfaction with personal safety (75%) (Table 1.9).

Confidence in the police was lower among those who had experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse (89%) than among those who had not been abused as children (92%). Similarly, confidence in the Canadian criminal courts was lower among those who had been victimized in childhood (68%) compared to those that had not (74%). Levels of confidence in police and the courts were lowest among male victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, though female victims also expressed lower confidence than females who had not experienced abuse.

Lower levels of confidence in police and in the courts persisted regardless of whether or not victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse also reported adult victimization in the past 12 months (Table 1.9).

Weaker sense of belonging reported by adults with history of abuse during childhood

Those with a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse had a weaker sense of belonging to their local communities, compared to those who had not been abused. About one-quarter (26%) of people who had experienced abuse as a child reported a weak or somewhat weak sense of belonging, compared to 20% of those without a history of child abuse. This held true for male and female victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse (Table 1.7).

Feelings of community belonging were weakest among those who endured victimization as adults in the previous 12 months in addition to childhood victimization: over one-third of those who reported both childhood and adult victimization reported that their feeling of belonging in their community was weak or somewhat weak (34%) (Table 1.9).

Child abuse victims more likely to suffer poor physical health in adulthood

Previous research has shown a link between a history of child abuse and poor physical health later in life (Afifi et al. 2016), and data from the 2014 GSS support these findings. Those with a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were less likely than non-victims to report that their physical health was very good or excellent (57% versus 64%) and more likely to report poor physical health (14% versus 9%). While this held true for both males and females, when it came to reporting poor physical health the differences between child abuse victims and non-victims were largest among women (15% compared to 9%) (Table 1.7).

Those who had been victimized as children were more likely to report poor physical health in adulthood whether or not they also experienced criminal victimization as adults (in the year preceding the survey). However, those who had experiences of victimization as both children and adults were the most likely to report poor physical health (18%) (Table 1.8).

Similar marital, educational, employment and income outcomes for those with and without history of child abuse

When it came to some key life outcomes like marital status, education, employment and income, differences between those with a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse and those with no such history were detected but minimal.

Overall, people with a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were more likely to report being in a current marriage or common-law union, compared to people with no history of child abuse (64% versus 60%), and they were also less likely to be single (25% versus 30%) (Table 1.7).

Educational attainment was also fairly similar for those who reported having experienced physical and/or sexual abuse as a child and for those with no such history of abuse. Slightly higher proportions of those who had been abused reported having a bachelor's degree or higher (27% versus 26%), and fewer reported having a high school degree or less (38% versus 43% of non-victims) (Table 1.7).

As with marital status and educational attainment, differences in employment status among those with a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse compared to those with no such history were fairly limited. Larger proportions of those who had been abused reported employment as their main activity during the past 12 months (62% versus 55%), and fewer reported being a student (9% versus 14%). Relatedly, more people who reported a history of child abuse also reported personal incomes falling into higher brackets, and fewer reported lower personal incomes (Table 1.7).

While these findings suggest some differences in the marital, educational, employment and income outcomes between those with and without a history of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, the effect of age should be considered since data suggest some age groups in Canada have a higher prevalence of childhood victimization.

To see if the relative outcomes of those who did and did not report a history of child abuse held regardless of age, the age distribution of the non-abused population was adjusted to match that of the abused population, which is somewhat younger.[24] The resulting findings show that education, employment and income levels reported by those that had and had not been victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were almost identical once age was factored in. When it came to marital status, those who had been abused in childhood were less likely to be in a current marriage or common-law union than those with no such history.

Summary

Self-reported data from the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) show that child maltreatment—that is, physical and/or sexual violence committed by an adult against a child under 15 years old, as well as witnessing violence committed by a parent or guardian against another adult in the home—affected one-third of Canadians aged 15 years and older (33%).

Physical violence was the most common type of child abuse, reported by over a quarter (26%) of Canadians aged 15 and older. Childhood sexual abuse was reported by just under one in ten people (8%). One in ten (10%) Canadians also reported that before they turned 15, they witnessed violence committed by a parent or guardian against another adult in the home. Most (70%) people who witnessed this type of violence as children were also victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse. For most child witnesses who were also victims of physical abuse, a parent or guardian was the perpetrator of the most serious incident (73%).

Many people experienced severe forms of physical (23%) and sexual (4%) violence as children, and some experienced high frequencies of abuse. A variety of perpetrators were identified by victims, contingent on the victims' sex and the type of abuse suffered. The overwhelming majority (93%) of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse victims in the provinces indicated that before they turned 15, they had not spoken to police or child protection services about the abuse.

Aboriginal people were more likely to report having experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse compared to non-Aboriginal people (40% versus 29%), and Aboriginal women were especially over-represented. When it came to the prevalence and severity of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, statistically significant differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people were limited to the population aged 30 and older.

People who had been subjected to childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were more likely to report that as adults aged 15 years or older, they had experienced some sort of criminal victimization in the previous year. This included overall victimization (13% versus 8%) as well as violent victimization (7% versus 3%). After controlling for other factors, victims of child maltreatment were found to be at a higher risk for both spousal and non-spousal violent victimization.

The GSS provides for analysis of various indicators of physical, mental and social well-being, and victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse were almost always less likely than non-victims to report positive outcomes according to these measures. In most cases, child abuse victims' increased likelihood to report poor physical, mental and social well-being persisted regardless of whether or not they had also experienced victimization as adults in the 12 months preceding the

survey. However, when it came to key socioeconomic elements such as education, employment and income, few differences were found between people who had experienced abuse as children and those who had not.

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Notes

1. For example, see Widom and Shepard 1996; Widom and Morris 1997.

2. The 2012 Canadian Community Health Survey on Mental Health included 'being spanked with something hard enough to hurt' as part of a question regarding experiences of child maltreatment. Spanking was not specified in the 2014 General Social Survey version of this question. Comparisons between results from these two surveys should not be made.

3. It is important to note that violence by a parent or guardian against 'another adult in the home' may or may not refer to intimate partner violence. Other types of family violence (for example, violence against an adult sibling, grandparent or other family member) as well as violence against an adult friend, roommate or other person may be included here.

4. See Family Violence Laws, Department of Justice for information regarding legislation in Canadian provinces and territories.

5. The 2014 General Social Survey asks respondents to report the number of times they experienced sexual abuse (one question for each of the two types of sexual abuse asked about). For each question, respondents can answer that the abuse happened once or twice, three to five times, six to ten times, or 11 times or more. Thus, a respondent who answers '11 times or more' to both questions is reporting 22 or more instances of abuse. More instances are possible, however, since no maximum number of instances is specified in the question. Although the corresponding 'maximum minimum' value for physical abuse is 33 (based on three questions, each with the '11 times or more' answer option), the value 22 is used when questions about physical and sexual abuse are combined.

6. Unlike in other parts of this analysis, counts presented here include only those respondents that did not answer 'don't know' or 'refusal' to any of the questions related to type and frequency of physical and sexual abuse. Approximately 4% of respondents answered 'don't know' or 'refusal' to one of these questions.

7. Respondents were asked about their relationship with the person who committed the most serious act of physical and sexual abuse (respectively) against them. It is therefore unknown if the same person or relationship type was involved in other instances of abuse that the respondent may have experienced.

8. Results for the answer categories friend, current boyfriend/girlfriend, former boyfriend/girlfriend, acquaintance, neighbour and classmate have been grouped due to small counts.

9. See footnote 5.

10. The percentage of males and females reporting specific frequencies are not shown here due to small (unreleasable) counts.

11. See footnote 5.

12. Information on whether or not childhood maltreatment was reported to police or child protection services was not collected in the territories.

13. No significant difference between males and females when it came to reporting by type of abuse.

14. Respondents were asked if they had spoken to police or child protection services about *any* of the abuse that they had experienced. For those victims who suffered multiple incidents of abuse (that may have differed in type and severity), it is not known which incident resulted in the victim speaking to authorities.

15. Statistics on frequency of abuse exclude respondents who answered 'don't know' or 'refusal' to any of the questions about the type and frequency of physical and sexual abuse (approximately 4% of respondents). Overall, 7% of victims in the

provinces reported having spoken to police or child protection services, regardless of whether those who answered 'don't know' or 'refusal' to any of the questions about the type and frequency of physical and sexual abuse are included.

16. See footnote 5.

17. Data on who victims spoke to about their experiences of childhood maltreatment were not asked of respondents in the territories.

18. The General Social Survey did not collect information on the type of government care (for example, residential schools or other types of government-run institutions). For consistency with data on Aboriginal victims' speaking to authorities about their experiences of abuse, statistics on government care exclude respondents from the territories.

19. Questions regarding sexual orientation were asked only of those respondents aged 18 years or older.

20.'Visible minority' excludes single origin White, single origin Aboriginal, and multiple origin White/Latin American and White/Arab-West Asian, as per definitions used by the Census of Canada.

21. Due to limitations in sample size, comparisons of male and female victims are not possible here.

22. Includes respondents who reported that their mental or psychological condition limits their daily activities sometimes, often or always, excluding learning disabilities. It is not known if those who reported a mental or psychological condition first experienced it before or after they experienced child abuse.

23. Under this definition, cannabis that was prescribed to the respondent by a doctor is excluded.

24. For more information on age standardized rates, see Statistics Canada's information page, Age-Standardized Rates.

Detailed data tables

Table 1.1
Self-reported child maltreatment, by sex, Canada, 2014

Type of child maltreatment	Males†		Females		Total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Some form of child maltreatment[1]	5,120,967	35	4,602,459	31*	9,723,426	33
Physical and/or sexual abuse[2]	4,709,207	32	4,083,152	27*	8,792,359	30
Physical abuse[3]	4,538,887	31	3,277,124	22*	7,816,012	26
Sexual abuse[4]	569,383	4	1,776,459	12*	2,345,842	8
Both physical and sexual abuse[5]	399,063	3	970,432	7*	1,369,494	5
Witnessing violence[6]	1,453,825	10	1,599,205	11	3,053,030	10

* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Includes respondents who reported having experienced one, some, or all of the three types of child maltreatment (physical abuse by an adult, sexual abuse by an adult, or witnessing violence by a parent/guardian against another adult in the home) before age 15.
2. Includes respondents who reported having experienced either or both physical or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15. Respondents reporting these abuse types may also have reported witnessing violence by a parent/guardian against another adult in the home before age 15.
3. Respondents may also have reported sexual abuse by an adult before age 15 and/or witnessing violence by a parent/guardian in the home before age 15.
4. Respondents may also have reported physical abuse by an adult before age 15 and/or witnessing violence by a parent/guardian in the home before age 15.
5. Respondents may also have reported witnessing violence by a parent/guardian against another adult in the home before age 15.
6. Respondents may also have reported physical and/or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
Note: Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.2
Victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by minimum frequency of abuse and by sex, Canada, 2014

Frequency of abuse	Males†		Females		Total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Physical abuse[1]						
Minimum 1 to 6 instances of abuse	2,865,600	65	2,077,052	65	4,942,652	65
Minimum 7 to 21 instances of abuse	931,150	21	612,301	19	1,543,451	20
Minimum 22 instances of abuse	597,753	14	482,729	15	1,080,482	14
Sexual abuse[2]						
Minimum 1 to 6 instances of abuse	479,833	88	1,330,286	77*	1,810,118	80
Minimum 7 to 21 instances of abuse	33,077E	6E	203,764	12*	236,841	10
Minimum 22 instances of abuse	F	F	183,930	11	218,381	10
Physical and/or sexual abuse[3]						
Minimum 1 to 6 instances of abuse	2,972,496	65	2,596,452	66	5,568,948	65
Minimum 7 to 21 instances of abuse	961,678	21	736,698	19*	1,698,376	20
Minimum 22 instances of abuse	620,216	14	619,366	16*	1,239,582	15

E use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Respondents may also have reported sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
2. Respondents may also have reported physical abuse by an adult before age 15.
3. Includes respondents who reported having experienced either or both physical or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
Note: Totals and percent calculations exclude respondents that answered 'don't know' or 'refusal' to any of the questions on childhood physical and sexual abuse. Approximately 4% of respondents answered 'don't know' or 'refusal' to one of these questions. For this reason, totals presented here may not match totals presented on other tables, which may include respondents that answered 'don't know' or 'refusal' to one of these questions.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.3
Victims of self-reported childhood physical and sexual abuse, by sex and relationship of perpetrator to victim in most serious incident, Canada, 2014

Relationship of perpetrator to victim in most serious incident	Physical abuse			Sexual abuse		
	Males†	Females	Total	Males†	Females	Total
	percent					
Parent or step-parent	54	71*	61	4E	14*	11
Other family member[1]	8	11*	9	13	31*	26
Boy/girlfriend, friend, neighbour[2]	10	6*	8	27	31	30
Teacher, tutor, professor	14	4*	10	15	3*	6
Babysitter or nanny	F	0.5E	0.3E	3E	2E	3
Stranger	7	2*	5	35	16*	21
Other[3]	3	2*	2	3E	2E	2E

E use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Other family members include grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts, etc.
2. Includes current or former boyfriends or girlfriends, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, classmates and persons known by sight only.
3. Includes health practitioners, boarders, employers, and other relationships not otherwise specified.
Note: Includes respondents aged 15 and older. Includes the relationship between the victim and the person responsible for the most severe instance of abuse. Respondents reporting experiences of childhood physical abuse may also have reported childhood sexual abuse, and vice-versa. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.4
Informal sources of support sought by victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by sex, Canada, 2014

Source of support	Males†	Females	Total
	percent		
Family member	20	26*	23
Friend	9	12*	10
Teacher	2E	3*	2
Doctor or nurse	1E	3*	2
Spiritual advisor	F	0.8E	0.7E
Neighbour	0.5E	0.5E	0.5
Other[1]	0.7E	0.9E	0.8
Spoke to no one	72	62*	67

E use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Includes coaches, employers, and other individuals not otherwise specified.
Note: Includes respondents aged 15 and older who reported having experienced physical and/or sexual abuse before age 15. Respondents may have indicated more than one source of informal support. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.5
Self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse among select demographic groups, by sex, Canada, 2014

	Physical abuse			Sexual abuse			Physical and/or sexual abuse		
	Males‡	Females	Total	Males‡	Females	Total	Males‡	Females	Total
Select demographic group	percent								
Aboriginal identity									
Aboriginal	37*	35*	36*	7*	21*,**	13*	39*	42*	40*
Non-Aboriginal†	31	21**	26	4	12**	8	32	27**	29
Total	31	22**	26	4	12**	8	32	27**	30
Sexual orientation									
Gay, lesbian, bisexual	48*	37*,**	42*	10E*	26*,**	19*	52*	45*	48*
Heterosexual†	32	22**	27	4	12**	8	33	28**	30
Total[1]	31	22**	27	4	12**	8	33	28**	30
Immigration status									
Immigrant	32	21**	27	3	8*,**	6*	33	24*,**	29*
Non-immigrant†	31	23**	27	4	13**	9	32	29**	30
Total	31	22**	26	4	12**	8	32	27**	30
Visible minority status									
Visible minority	30	21**	25	3*	8*,**	5*	30	24*,**	27*
Not a visible minority†	32	22**	27	4	13**	9	33	28**	31
Total	31	22**	26	4	12**	8	32	27**	30

E use with caution
* significant difference from reference group (†) ($p < 0.05$)
** significant difference from reference group (‡) ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
‡ reference group
1. Percentage totals reported according to sexual orientation do not match those reported for other demographic groups because questions about sexual orientation are only asked to respondents aged 18 or older. Other questions are asked to respondents aged 15 or older.
Note: Respondents reporting experiences of childhood physical abuse may also have reported childhood sexual abuse, and vice-versa. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.6
Most serious self-reported personal victimization during the past 12 months among victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by sex, 2014

	Victims of child abuse[1]			Not victims of child abuse†			Total
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
Most serious victimization	percent						
Total victimization[2]	**12***	**14***	**13***	**8**	**8**	**8**	**9**
Total violent victimization[3]	**7***	**7***	**7***	**3**	**3**	**3**	**4**
Sexual assault	0.7E*	3*	2*	F	1	0.8	1
Robbery, attempted robbery	0.8E*	0.6E*	0.7E*	0.4E	0.2E	0.3E	0.4
Assault	6*	3*	5*	3	2	2	3
Theft, attempted theft of personal property[4]	5	6*	6*	5	4	4	5
No victimization[5]	86*	85*	86*	91	92	91	89

E use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significant difference from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Includes respondents who reported experiencing childhood physical and/or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
2. Includes sexual assault, robbery or attempted robbery, assault, and theft or attempted theft after respondents had turned 15 and during the 12 months preceding the survey.
3. Includes sexual assault, robbery or attempted robbery and assault after respondents had turned 15 and during the 12 months preceding the survey.
4. Includes theft or attempted theft of personal property after respondents had turned 15 and during the 12 months preceding the survey.
5. Includes those respondents who indicated they had not experienced sexual assault, robbery or attempted robbery, assault, or theft or attempted theft of personal property after they had turned 15 and during the 12 months preceding the survey.
Note: Includes respondents aged 15 years and older. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.7
Characteristics and life outcomes of victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by sex, Canada, 2014

	Victims of child abuse[1]			Not victims of child abuse[1]			
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Total
Type of characteristic or life outcome	percent						
Mental/psychological disability[2]							
Yes	7*	14*	10*	3	5	4	6
No	92*	86*	89*	96	94	95	93
Drug use in past month[3]							
Yes	13*	7*	10*	9	3	6	7
No	86*	92*	89*	91	96	94	92
Binge drinking in past month[4]							
Yes	34	21*	28*	34	17	25	26
No	65	79*	71*	64	82	74	72
History of homelessness[5]							
Yes	15*	15*	15*	6	5	6	8
No	84*	85*	84*	93	94	94	90
Arrested in the past 12 months							
Yes	2E*	0.4E	1*	1	F	0.6	0.8
No	98*	100	99*	99	100	99	99
Satisfaction with personal safety							
Satisfied or very satisfied	89*	81*	86*	93	87	90	88
Neither satisfied or not	7*	14*	10*	5	9	7	8
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	3*	4*	3*	2	3	2	3
Confidence in police							
Some or great deal of confidence	87*	91*	89*	91	94	92	91
Little or no confidence	13*	9*	11*	8	5	6	8
Confidence in courts							
Some or great deal of confidence	67*	69*	68*	73	75	74	71
Little or no confidence	30*	26*	28*	22	17	19	22
Belonging to community							
Strong or somewhat strong	72*	71*	72*	76	77	76	75
Weak or somewhat weak	25*	26*	26*	21	19	20	22
Trust in family members							
Can trust or trust strongly	95*	95*	95*	98	98	98	97
Can trust somewhat	3*	3*	3*	1	1	1	2
Cannot trust	1*	2*	1*	0.6	0.4E	0.5	0.8
Trust in strangers							
Can trust or trust strongly	8*	9	9*	11	9	10	9
Can trust somewhat	31	29	30	31	28	30	29
Cannot trust	58*	60	59*	55	60	57	58
Self-rated physical health							
Very good or excellent	57*	56*	57*	64	64	64	61
Good	30*	29*	30*	27	27	27	28
Poor	13*	15*	14*	9	9	9	11
Marital status							
Married/common-law	67*	59	64*	60	59	60	61
Separated/divorced/widowed	8*	16	12	6	15	11	11
Single	25*	25	25*	33	26	30	28
Education							
High school or less	39*	36*	38*	44	42	43	41
College, less than bachelor's degree	33*	36*	35*	30	31	30	32
Bachelor's degree or higher	27*	27	27*	25	27	26	26
Main activity in past 12 months							
Employed	68*	56*	62*	63	48	55	57
Student	8*	9*	9*	14	14	14	12
Other[6]	23	35*	29	22	37	30	30

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1.7 — continued
Characteristics and life outcomes of victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, by sex, Canada, 2014

	Victims of child abuse[1]			Not victims of child abuse[†]			
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Total
Type of characteristic or life outcome	percent						
Personal income							
Less than $20,000	19	29*	24*	21	31	26	25
$20,000 to $39,999	18	22*	20*	18	24	21	21
$40,000 to $59,999	16	15	16	16	15	15	15
$60,000 to $79,999	11	9*	10*	11	7	9	9
$80,000 to $99,999	7	5*	6*	7	4	5	5
$100,000 to $119,999	4	2	3*	3	1	2	3
$120,000 and over	8*	2	5*	7	2	4	5

E use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Includes respondents who reported experiencing childhood physical and/or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
2. Includes respondents who reported that their mental or psychological condition limits their daily activities sometimes, often or always, excluding learning disabilities. It is not known if those who reported a mental or psychological condition first experienced it before or after they experienced child abuse.
3. Includes respondents who reported that they had used non-prescribed drugs such as cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and others during the preceding month. Cannabis prescribed by a doctor is excluded.
4. Includes respondents who reported that they had 5 or more alcoholic beverages on the same occasion during the preceding month.
5. Includes respondents who reported that at some point in their lives they had to live in a shelter, on the street or an abandoned building, or had to make temporary living arrangements because they had nowhere else to go.
6. Includes respondents who were looking for paid work, retired, on parental leave, homemakers, stay-at-home parents, full-time volunteers or caregivers, experiencing a long-term illness, or involved in other activities outside of paid employment or study not otherwise specified.
Note: Includes respondents aged 15 years and older. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.8
Physical and mental health, substance use, arrests and homelessness among victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014

Type of characteristic or life outcome	Victims of child abuse[1]	Not victims of child abuse[†]	Total
	percent		
Self-rated physical health			
Total			
Very good or excellent	57*	64	61
Good	30*	27	28
Poor	14*	9	11
Adult victim[2]			
Very good or excellent	52*	68	61
Good	29*	24	26
Poor	18*	8	12
Not adult victim			
Very good or excellent	57*	64	61
Good	30*	27	28
Poor	13*	9	10
Mental/psychological disability[3]			
Total			
Yes	10*	4	6
No	89*	95	93
Adult victim[2]			
Yes	16*	9	12
No	84*	91	87
Not adult victim			
Yes	9*	4	5
No	90*	96	93
Drug use in past month[4]			
Total			
Yes	10*	6	7
No	89*	94	92
Adult victim[2]			
Yes	22*	16	18
No	77*	84	81
Not adult victim			
Yes	8*	5	6
No	91*	94	93
Binge drinking in past month[5]			
Total			
Yes	28*	25	26
No	71*	74	72
Adult victim[2]			
Yes	38	38	38
No	61	61	61
Not adult victim			
Yes	26*	24	24
No	73*	75	74
Arrested in the past 12 months			
Total			
Yes	1*	0.6	0.8
No	99*	99	99
Adult victim[2]			
Yes	F	2[E]	2[E]
No	96	98	97
Not adult victim			
Yes	1*	0.5	0.7
No	99*	99	99

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1.8 — continued
Physical and mental health, substance use, arrests and homelessness among victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014

Type of characteristic or life outcome	Victims of child abuse[1]	Not victims of child abuse†	Total
	percent		
History of homelessness[6]			
Total			
Yes	15*	6	8
No	84*	94	90
Adult victim[2]			
Yes	25*	10	16
No	75*	90	83
Not adult victim			
Yes	13*	5	8
No	86*	94	91

E use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Includes respondents who reported experiencing childhood physical and/or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
2. Includes respondents who reported having experienced sexual assault, robbery or attempted robbery, assault, and theft or attempted theft after they had turned 15 and during the 12 months preceding the survey.
3. Includes respondents who reported that their mental or psychological condition limits their daily activities sometimes, often or always, excluding learning disabilities. It is not known if those who reported a mental or psychological condition first experienced it before or after they experienced child abuse.
4. Includes respondents who reported that they had used non-prescribed drugs such as cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and others during the preceding month. Cannabis prescribed by a doctor is excluded.
5. Includes respondents who reported that they had 5 or more alcoholic beverages on the same occasion during the preceding month.
6. Includes respondents who reported that at some point in their lives they had to live in a shelter, on the street or an abandoned building, or had to make temporary living arrangements because they had nowhere else to go.
Note: Includes respondents aged 15 years and older. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 1.9
Sense of belonging, trust, safety and confidence in the justice system among victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014

Sense of belonging, trust, etc.	Victims of child abuse[1]	Not victims of child abuse[†]	Total
	percent		
Satisfaction with personal safety			
Total			
Satisfied or very satisfied	86*	90	88
Neither satisfied or not	10*	7	8
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	3*	2	3
Adult victim[2]			
Satisfied or very satisfied	75*	83	80
Neither satisfied or not	17*	12	14
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	8*	5	6
Not adult victim			
Satisfied or very satisfied	87*	90	89
Neither satisfied or not	9*	7	7
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	3*	2	2
Confidence in police			
Total			
Some or great deal of confidence	89*	92	91
Little or no confidence	11*	6	8
Adult victim[2]			
Some or great deal of confidence	78*	84	81
Little or no confidence	22*	16	19
Not adult victim			
Some or great deal of confidence	90*	93	92
Little or no confidence	9*	5	7
Confidence in courts			
Total			
Some or great deal of confidence	68*	74	71
Little or no confidence	28*	19	22
Adult victim[2]			
Some or great deal of confidence	60*	68	64
Little or no confidence	37*	29	33
Not adult victim			
Some or great deal of confidence	69*	74	72
Little or no confidence	27*	18	21
Belonging to community			
Total			
Strong or somewhat strong	72*	76	75
Weak or somewhat weak	26*	20	22
Adult victim[2]			
Strong or somewhat strong	64*	70	67
Weak or somewhat weak	34*	28	31
Not adult victim			
Strong or somewhat strong	73*	77	76
Weak or somewhat weak	24*	19	21
Trust in family members			
Total			
Can trust or trust strongly	95*	98	97
Can trust somewhat	3*	1	2
Cannot trust	1*	0.5	0.8
Adult victim[2]			
Can trust or trust strongly	92*	98	95
Can trust somewhat	5E*	1E	3
Cannot trust	2E*	0.6E	1
Not adult victim			
Can trust or trust strongly	96*	98	97
Can trust somewhat	3*	1	2
Cannot trust	1*	0.5	0.8

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1.9 — continued
Sense of belonging, trust, safety and confidence in the justice system among victims of self-reported childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, Canada, 2014

Sense of belonging, trust, etc.	Victims of child abuse[1]	Not victims of child abuse†	Total
	percent		
Trust in strangers			
Total			
Can trust or trust strongly	9*	10	9
Can trust somewhat	30	30	29
Cannot trust	59*	57	58
Adult victim[2]			
Can trust or trust strongly	6	8	7
Can trust somewhat	29	28	28
Cannot trust	64	63	64
Not adult victim			
Can trust or trust strongly	9*	10	10
Can trust somewhat	31	30	30
Cannot trust	58	57	57

E use with caution
* significantly different from reference group ($p < 0.05$)
† reference group
1. Includes respondents who reported experiencing childhood physical and/or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
2. Includes respondents who reported having experienced sexual assault, robbery or attempted robbery, assault, and theft or attempted theft after they had turned 15 and during the 12 months preceding the survey.
Note: Includes respondents aged 15 years and older. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Section 2: Police-reported family violence in Canada – An overview

by Marta Burczycka

Family violence has wide-ranging impacts on the victim, the broader family unit, and society as a whole. Long term effects on individuals include increased risk of chronic illness, alcohol and drug use, job loss leading to economic vulnerability and social isolation (Department of Justice Canada n.d.; World Health Organization 2002). The Government of Canada, through the Family Violence Initiative, works to prevent, monitor and respond to the consequences of family violence in Canada (Family Violence Initiative 2010).

In the context of this section, 'family' refers to relationships defined through blood, marriage, common-law partnership, foster care, or adoption, and 'family violence' refers to violent *Criminal Code* offences that come to the attention of police, where the perpetrator is a family member of the victim. Although this definition of family violence does not include dating relationships, analysis of violence within dating relationships is presented in the section of this report titled "Police-reported intimate partner violence". Current theories among family violence researchers situates dating and spousal violence within the broader spheres of intimate partner and family violence, irrespective of the living arrangements or formal relationship status of the victim and accused (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016).

Using police-reported data for 2015 from the Uniform Crime Reporting and Homicide surveys, this section presents an overview of key national and provincial findings on the nature and prevalence of police-reported family violence in Canada, including types of offences associated with family violence, the relationship between the victims and the accused, as well as some socio-demographic risk factors for family violence. Highlights in this section provide a general overview of family violence, as well as key findings related to specific victim characteristics that are examined in more detail later in this report.

This section covers all types of violent *Criminal Code* offences which came to the attention of police, ranging from uttering threats to physical and sexual violence to homicide. Non-violent crimes such as theft and fraud, all types of abuse which were not substantiated by police, as well as conduct which is not covered by the *Criminal Code* are not included in this section. Additionally, analysis based on Homicide Survey data excludes homicides which have not been solved by police. Although providing important contextual information on incidents of family violence which comes to the attention of police, this section may underestimate the true extent of family violence in Canada. For example, self-reported data from the 2014 General Social Survey show that 70% of victims of spousal violence and 93% of victims of childhood physical and/or sexual abuse never spoke to police about their experiences (Burczycka 2016; see also Section 1 of this report).

Unless otherwise specified, all rates shown in this section are per 100,000 population. Definitions and information on data sources and survey methodology can be found in the 'Survey description' section at the end of this publication.

Highlights

Females twice as likely as males to be victims of police-reported family violence

- In 2015, there were over 86,000 victims of violence committed by a spouse, parent, child, sibling or other family member in Canada, representing over one-quarter (26%) of all victims of police-reported violent crime (Table 2.1).
- Just under half (47%) of victims of police-reported family violence were victimized by a spouse or an ex-spouse, while nearly one in five were victimized by a parent (17%). Females represented 79% of spousal violence victims and 56% of victims of parental violence (Table 2.1).
- Similar to previous years, close to seven out of ten victims of family violence reported to police in 2015 were young girls or women (67%). One-third (33%) of all female victims of police-reported violent crime had been victimized by a family member, a proportion almost double that of male victims (18%). Meanwhile, males were proportionally more likely than females to have been victimized by someone outside the family (82% versus 67%) (Table 2.1).
- Female victims of family violence were more likely to have been victimized by a spouse than male victims (55% versus 30%). Male victims were more likely to have been victimized by a parent (23% versus 15% among females) or an extended family member (19% versus 12%) (Table 2.1).
- In 2015, the rate of police-reported family violence against females was double that of males (325 per 100,000 versus 160). For women, those aged 30 to 34 recorded the highest rates of family violence (576 per 100,000), while men aged 15 to 19 years had the highest rates (228) (Table 2.2).

Nearly three-quarters of victims of police-reported family violence were physically assaulted

- Physical assault was the most common form of police-reported family violence in 2015 (73%). Among family-related physical assault victims, four out of five experienced common (level 1) assault (80%). Major (levels 2 and 3) assaults

were experienced by 19% of family-related physical assault victims, and were more prevalent among males (25%, compared to 16% of female family-related physical assault victims) (Table 2.3).

- In 2015, sexual offences[1] and criminal harassment were more than twice as common among female victims of police-reported family violence as male victims (10% versus 4% and 5% versus 2%, respectively). Equal proportions of male and female victims of police-reported family violence suffered violations causing death[2] and attempted murder (0.2% of victims of both sexes for these violations) (Table 2.3).
- According to police-reported data for 2015, the proportion of incidents involving victims of family violence that were not cleared[3] by police (17%) was almost half that of incidents of non-family violence that went uncleared (32%). Compared to male victims, incidents involving female victims were more likely to be cleared by charge in instances of family violence (61% among females versus 46% among males) and in incidents not involving family violence (52% versus 43%) (Table 2.4).
- The rate of police-reported family violence declined by 18% between 2010 and 2015, marking the 6th consecutive year of decline. This was a slightly lesser decrease than the 22% drop in the rate of non-family violence reported by police over this same time period. In 2015, the rate of police-reported family violence against females continued to be twice as high as among males, and the decrease in the rate since 2010 was considerably smaller among males (-12%) than among females (-21%) (Table 2.5).

Saskatchewan reports the highest rate of family violence among the provinces

- Overall, Canada's 2015 police-reported rate of family violence was almost unchanged from the previous year (-0.8%). Among the provinces and territories, increases were reported in Manitoba (+4%), the Northwest Territories (+3%), and Newfoundland and Labrador, Alberta and British Columbia (+2% each). Yukon recorded a 17% decrease in the rate of police-reported family violence between 2014 and 2015, while the rate in Nova Scotia declined by 11% (Table 2.6).
- As with police-reported crime overall (Allen 2016), the territories had the highest rates of police-reported family violence in Canada in 2015. Specifically, Nunavut (2,504 per 100,000 population) recorded the highest rate of family violence, followed by the Northwest Territories (1,938) and Yukon (731) (Table 2.6).
- As in the previous year, in 2015 the provinces with the highest rate of police-reported family violence were Saskatchewan (480 per 100,000 population) and Manitoba (374). Meanwhile, as in 2014, the lowest rates in 2015 were recorded in Ontario (150) and Prince Edward Island (154). Of note, the distribution of highest and lowest rates of family violence among the provinces loosely mirrored the provincial distribution of crime rates in general (Allen 2016) (Table 2.6).
- Looking specifically at police-reported family-related physical and sexual assault, rates declined in most provinces and territories between 2014 and 2015. The largest decline was recorded in Yukon (-17%), followed by Nunavut and Nova Scotia (-8% each). Meanwhile, the largest increases in the rate of family-related physical and sexual assault were reported in the Northwest Territories (+5%), Manitoba (+4%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (+4%) (Table 2.7).
- Canadians living in census metropolitan areas (CMAs) were generally at lower risk of police-reported family violence (199 victims per 100,000 population) than those living outside CMAs (333). In 2015, Saguenay recorded the highest rate among CMAs (348), followed by Trois-Rivières and Gatineau (336 each). The lowest rates among the CMAs were reported in Ottawa (85), Guelph (105) and Peterborough (117) (Table 2.8).

Rate of family-related homicide down by half since 1985

- Between 2010 and 2015, the rate of family-related violations causing death, attempted murder, and physical and sexual assault declined by 14% to a rate of 190 victims per 100,000, according to police-reported data. While the largest decrease was in sexual assault by a family member (-20%), police-reported spousal sexual assault increased by 4% while sexual assault by family members other than spouses declined by 24% (Table 2.9).
- In 2015, police reported a total of 163 family-related homicides in Canada, translating into a rate of 4.5 victims per 1 million population. The rate of family-related homicide has decreased by 49% since 1985, in line with the overall decrease in the Canadian homicide rate over the same time period (-44%) (Mulligan 2016) (Table 2.10).
- Family-related homicide rates have declined by about one-half for both males and females since 1985. However, as has been the case historically, in 2015 women remained at a higher risk of family-related homicide relative to men (5.3 female victims per 1 million population versus 3.8 male victims) (Table 2.10).

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Notes

1. Sexual offences include sexual assault (levels 1, 2 and 3), sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, sexual exploitation, incest, corrupting children, luring a child via a computer, and voyeurism.

2. Violations causing death include first and second degree murder, manslaughter, infanticide, criminal negligence causing death, and other related violations causing death.

3. Police can respond to a family violence incident in one of three ways: charge the accused, clear the incident in another way (e.g. through departmental discretion, reasons beyond the control of police department, or complainant request for charges not be laid), or not clear the incident because of insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.

Detailed data tables

Table 2.1
Victims of police-reported violent crime, by sex of victim and relationship of accused to victim, Canada, 2015

Relationship of accused to victim	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Total victims of family violence	**57,952**	**33**	**28,154**	**18**	**86,106**	**26**
Total spouses	31,931	18	8,573	5	40,504	12
Current spouse[1]	23,312	13	6,257	4	29,569	9
Ex-spouse[2]	8,619	5	2,316	1	10,935	3
Other immediate or extended family members	26,021	15	19,581	12	45,602	14
Parent[3]	8,449	5	6,528	4	14,977	5
Child[4]	5,422	3	3,395	2	8,817	3
Sibling[5]	5,418	3	4,221	3	9,639	3
Extended family member[6]	6,732	4	5,437	3	12,169	4
Total victims of non-family violence	**115,366**	**67**	**130,992**	**82**	**246,358**	**74**
Dating partners[7]	41,080	24	10,944	7	52,024	16
Boyfriend or girlfriend	25,292	15	6,651	4	31,943	10
Ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend	14,622	8	3,665	2	18,287	6
Other intimate partner	1,166	0.7	628	0.4	1,794	0.5
Close friend[8]	7,392	4	7,976	5	15,368	5
Business relationship	4,826	3	7,006	4	11,832	4
Casual acquaintance[9]	31,053	18	40,418	25	71,471	21
Criminal relationship[10]	321	0.2	1,511	0.9	1,832	0.6
Authority figure[11]	4,227	2	6,054	4	10,281	3
Stranger	26,467	15	57,083	36	83,550	25
Unknown relationship[12]	96	...	130	...	226	...
Total victims of violent crime[13]	**173,414**	**100**	**159,276**	**100**	**332,690**	**100**

... not applicable

1. Includes legally married and common-law partners aged 15 years and older.
2. Includes separated and divorced partners aged 15 years and older.
3. Includes biological, adoptive, step and foster parent. Includes a small number of victims under 18 years of age where the relationship of the accused to the victim was miscoded as 'child' (including 'step-child') and was therefore recoded as 'parent' (including 'step-parent').
4. Includes biological, adopted, step and foster child. Includes a small number of victims aged 65 years and older where the relationship of the accused to the victim was miscoded as 'parent' (including 'step-parent') and was therefore recoded as 'child' (including 'step-child').
5. Includes biological, step, half, foster or adopted brother or sister.
6. Includes all other family members related by blood, marriage (including common-law) or adoption. Examples include uncles, aunts, cousins and grandparents.
7. Includes victims under 90 years of age, including dating partner victims under the age of 15. The counts for dating partner victims do not match the information presented in Section 3 of the report, which examines intimate partner violence for those aged 15 years and older.
8. Includes roommates. 'Roommates' was added as a relationship category beginning in 2013.
9. Includes neighbours.
10. Includes relationships with the victim based on illegal activities, such as drugs or prostitution.
11. Includes persons in a position of trust or authority who are not family members. Includes authority figures and reverse authority figures (e.g., student-to-teacher, patient-to-doctor, teen-to-youth counsellors/group home workers, prisoner-to guard). 'Reverse authority figures' was added as a relationship category beginning in 2013.
12. Includes incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was reported by police as 'unknown.'
13. Includes violations causing death, attempted murder, sexual assault, assault, robbery, criminal harassment, uttering threats and other violations involving violence or the threat of violence.

Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Spousal violence victims under the age of 15 years are included in the category 'unknown relationship' and not in the categories related to spousal violence. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages have been calculated excluding victims where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 2.2
Victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and age group of victim, Canada, 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Age group of victim	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
0 to 4 years	1,210	129	1,155	117	2,365	123
5 to 9 years	2,277	240	1,966	198	4,243	219
10 to 14 years	3,253	361	2,041	214	5,294	285
15 to 19 years	4,723	465	2,455	228	7,178	343
20 to 24 years	6,105	510	2,363	188	8,468	345
25 to 29 years	6,786	555	2,422	196	9,208	374
30 to 34 years	7,203	576	2,449	197	9,652	387
35 to 39 years	6,727	560	2,283	191	9,010	376
40 to 44 years	5,698	486	2,408	206	8,106	346
45 to 49 years	4,684	387	2,437	201	7,121	294
50 to 54 years	3,716	271	2,283	165	5,999	218
55 to 59 years	2,333	179	1,544	119	3,877	149
60 to 64 years	1,285	114	1,020	93	2,305	103
65 to 69 years	867	89	612	66	1,479	78
70 to 74 years	500	70	327	50	827	60
75 years and older	585	46	389	41	974	44
Total	**57,952**	**325**	**28,154**	**160**	**86,106**	**243**

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 2.3
Victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and type of offence, Canada, 2015

Type of offence	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Violations causing death[1]	101	0.2	70	0.2	171	0.2
Attempted murder[2]	89	0.2	65	0.2	154	0.2
Sexual offences[3]	5,833	10	1,068	4	6,901	8
Physical assault	40,832	70	22,086	78	62,918	73
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)[4]	6,665	12	5,599	20	12,264	14
Common assault (level 1)[5]	33,938	59	16,348	58	50,286	58
Other assaults[6]	229	0.4	139	0.5	368	0.4
Criminal harassment	2,798	5	570	2	3,368	4
Indecent or harassing phone calls	637	1	202	0.7	839	1
Uttering threats	5,984	10	3,501	12	9,485	11
Robbery	134	0.2	102	0.4	236	0.3
Other violent offences[7]	1,544	3	490	2	2,034	2
Total	**57,952**	**100**	**28,154**	**100**	**86,106**	**100**

1. Violations causing death include first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter, infanticide, criminal negligence causing death, and other related violations causing death.
2. Attempted murder includes conspiracy to commit murder.
3. Includes sexual assault, classified as one of three levels according to the seriousness of the incidents. Level 1 sexual assault is the category of least physical injury to the victim; level 2 includes sexual assault with a weapon, threats to use a weapon, or causing bodily harm; and level 3 includes aggravated sexual assault which wounds, maims, disfigures, or endangers the life of the victim. Also includes other sexual crimes such as non-consensual distribution of intimate images, sexual interference, sexual exploitation, luring a child via a computer, and voyeurism.
4. Level 2 assault is defined as assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm and level 3 assault is defined as assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.
5. Level 1 assault is the least serious form of assault and includes pushing, slapping, punching and face-to-face verbal threats.
6. Other assaults include unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, using firearm or imitation firearm in the commission of an offence, pointing a firearm, assault against a peace or public officer, and other assaults.
7. Other violent offences include criminal negligence causing bodily harm, trap likely to cause or causing bodily harm, kidnapping, forcible confinement, hostage-taking, trafficking in persons, abduction, extortion, intimidation of a non-justice participant, explosives causing death or bodily harm, arson, and other violent violations.

Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 2.4
Victims of police-reported violent crime, by sex of victim and relationship of accused to victim and type of clearance status, Canada, 2015

Type of clearance status	Victims of family violence						Victims of non-family violence					
	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims		Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Not cleared[1]	8,957	15	5,360	19	14,317	17	33,032	29	45,461	35	78,493	32
Cleared by charge	35,096	61	12,965	46	48,061	56	60,304	52	56,854	43	117,158	48
Cleared otherwise	13,899	24	9,829	35	23,728	28	22,030	19	28,677	22	50,707	21
Complainant requests charges not be laid	7,205	12	5,260	19	12,465	14	10,929	9	15,811	12	26,740	11
Reasons beyond the control of department	3,006	5	1,975	7	4,981	6	2,238	2	2,564	2	4,802	2
Departmental discretion	2,999	5	2,250	8	5,249	6	7,035	6	8,062	6	15,097	6
Other[2]	689	1	344	1	1,033	1	1,828	2	2,240	2	4,068	2
Total	**57,952**	**100**	**28,154**	**100**	**86,106**	**100**	**115,366**	**100**	**130,992**	**100**	**246,358**	**100**

1. 'Not cleared' refers to incidents where an accused person has not been identified in connection with the incident or incidents where there is insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.
2. 'Cleared by other means' includes suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, accused is less than 12 years of age, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, accused already sentenced, diversionary programs, incident cleared by a lesser statute, incident cleared by other municipal/provincial/federal agency.

Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. In cases of domestic violence, every Canadian jurisdiction has implemented some form of pro-charging policies. The particular parameters of these pro-charging policies can vary regionally.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 2.5
Victims of police-reported violent crime, by sex of victim and relationship of accused to victim, Canada, 2009 to 2015

Type of violence (relationship of accused to victim)	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
2009						
Family violence	68,787	412	30,631	186	99,418	300
Non-family violence	133,274	798	165,026	1,001	298,300	899
2010						
Family violence	68,784	408	30,059	181	98,843	295
Non-family violence	136,027	806	161,338	969	297,365	887
2011						
Family violence	65,485	385	29,318	174	94,803	280
Non-family violence	126,690	744	151,546	901	278,236	822
2012						
Family violence	63,220	367	29,424	173	92,644	271
Non-family violence	123,172	715	146,889	863	270,061	789
2013						
Family violence	59,647	343	28,086	163	87,733	253
Non-family violence	115,415	663	133,170	773	248,585	718
2014						
Family violence	57,528	327	27,461	158	84,989	243
Non-family violence	110,446	628	127,455	732	237,901	680
2015						
Family violence	57,271	323	27,745	158	85,016	241
Non-family violence	114,079	643	130,063	741	244,142	692
Percent change of rate from 2010 to 2015						
Family violence	...	**-21**	...	**-12**	...	**-18**
Non-family violence	...	**-20**	...	**-24**	...	**-22**
Percent change of rate from 2014 to 2015						
Family violence	...	**-1**	...	**0.2**	...	**-0.8**
Non-family violence	...	**2**	...	**1**	...	**2**

... not applicable

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Based on the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database, which includes data from 99% of police services in Canada. As a result, the rates may not match totals presented elsewhere in the report.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database.

Table 2.6
Victims of police-reported family violence, by province or territory, 2014 and 2015

Province or territory	2014		2015		Percent change of rate from 2014 to 2015
	number	rate	number	rate	percent
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,387	264	1,405	268	2
Prince Edward Island	233	161	224	154	-4
Nova Scotia	2,042	220	1,818	195	-11
New Brunswick	1,787	239	1,749	234	-2
Quebec	25,413	313	25,231	309	-1
Ontario	20,613	154	20,211	150	-3
Manitoba	4,433	359	4,668	374	4
Saskatchewan	5,305	488	5,272	480	-2
Alberta	11,884	289	12,298	294	2
British Columbia	9,817	213	10,090	217	2
Yukon	324	878	273	731	-17
Northwest Territories	828	1,886	853	1,938	3
Nunavut	923	2,559	924	2,504	-2
Canada	**84,989**	**243**	**85,016**	**241**	**-0.8**

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Based on the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database, which includes data from 99% of police services in Canada. As a result, the rates may not match totals presented elsewhere in the report.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database.

Table 2.7
Victims of police-reported family violence, by physical and sexual assault and province or territory, 2015

Province or territory	Total physical assault and sexual assault			Physical assault (levels 1, 2 and 3)			Sexual assault (levels 1, 2 and 3)		
	number	rate	percent change of rate from previous year[1]	number	rate	percent change of rate from previous year[1]	number	rate	percent change of rate from previous year[1]
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,164	222	4	1,069	204	4	95	18	12
Prince Edward Island	160	110	-5	137	94	-15	23	16	187
Nova Scotia	1,456	157	-8	1,323	142	-6	133	14	-21
New Brunswick	1,285	172	-2	1,165	156	-2	120	16	-7
Quebec	17,677	217	-0.5	16,493	202	-0.1	1,184	15	-5
Ontario	16,219	120	-4	14,580	108	-4	1,639	12	-4
Manitoba	4,031	323	4	3,703	297	6	328	26	-17
Saskatchewan	4,563	415	-1	4,264	388	-0.9	299	27	-7
Alberta	10,192	244	2	9,488	227	3	704	17	-2
British Columbia	8,289	179	2	7,788	168	2	501	11	8
Yukon	244	653	-17	229	613	-16	15	40	-26
Northwest Territories	752	1,709	5	716	1,627	7	36	82	-22
Nunavut	771	2,089	-8	714	1,935	-8	57	154	-12
Canada	**66,803**	**189**	**-0.6**	**61,669**	**175**	**-0.2**	**5,134**	**15**	**-4**

1. Percent change of rate from previous year is calculated using revised 2014 data.
Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Based on the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database, which includes data from 99% of police services in Canada. As a result, the rates may not match totals presented elsewhere in the report.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database.

Table 2.8
Victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and census metropolitan area, 2015

Census metropolitan area (CMA)[1, 2]	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
St. John's	212	204	139	138	351	171
Halifax	332	158	187	91	519	125
Moncton	208	268	130	168	338	218
Saint John	256	398	134	217	390	309
Saguenay	405	491	174	208	579	348
Québec	1,560	390	694	177	2,254	284
Sherbrooke	219	220	105	108	324	165
Trois-Rivières	358	459	159	209	517	336
Montréal	7,920	390	3,610	181	11,530	287
Gatineau[3]	765	464	331	205	1,096	336
Ottawa[4]	601	119	242	50	843	85
Kingston	158	189	61	75	219	133
Peterborough	105	169	36	62	141	117
Toronto[5]	5,962	214	2,488	93	8,450	155
Hamilton[6]	483	174	194	71	677	123
St. Catharines–Niagara	397	175	152	70	549	124
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	531	196	269	100	800	148
Brantford	247	358	115	172	362	266
Guelph	96	145	40	63	136	105
London	422	164	173	70	595	118
Windsor	377	249	166	112	543	181
Barrie	168	157	98	93	266	126
Greater Sudbury	217	263	85	106	302	185
Thunder Bay	267	439	112	190	379	316
Winnipeg	990	245	388	98	1,378	172
Regina	280	234	172	142	452	188
Saskatoon	439	289	189	122	628	205
Calgary	1,998	282	987	135	2,985	207
Edmonton	2,295	345	892	130	3,187	236
Kelowna	310	315	142	149	452	233
Abbotsford–Mission	291	321	120	130	411	225
Vancouver	2,632	210	1,104	90	3,736	150
Victoria	414	226	189	107	603	167
CMA total[7]	**32,752**	**273**	**14,455**	**123**	**47,207**	**199**
Non-CMA total	**25,200**	**433**	**13,699**	**233**	**38,899**	**333**
Canada	**57,952**	**325**	**28,154**	**160**	**86,106**	**243**

1. A CMA consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA typically comprises more than one police service.
2. CMA populations have been adjusted to follow policing boundaries. The Oshawa CMA is excluded from this table due to the incongruity between the police service jurisdictional boundaries and the CMA boundaries.
3. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
4. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
5. Excludes the portions of Halton Regional Police and Durham Regional Police that police the CMA of Toronto.
6. Excludes the portion of Halton Regional Police that polices the CMA of Hamilton.
7. Includes Halton Regional Police and Durham Regional Police, which are responsible for policing more than one CMA. This total also includes the portion of Durham Regional Police that polices the Oshawa CMA. Because of these inclusions, the CMA total will not equal the total of the individual CMAs.

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 2.9
Victims of police-reported family violence for selected violent offences, by relationship of accused to victim and type of offence, Canada, 2009 to 2015

Relationship of accused to victim and type of offence	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014		2015		Percent change of rate from 2010 to 2015
	rate	rate	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate	percent
Spouse[1]	**137**	**131**	**128**	**121**	**115**	**32,681**	**111**	**32,460**	**110**	**-16**
Violations causing death[2]	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	68	0.2	63	0.2	-12
Attempted murder[3]	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	60	0.2	56	0.2	-16
Sexual assault[4]	3	3	3	3	3	892	3	930	3	4
Physical assault[5]	134	128	124	118	111	31,661	108	31,411	106	-17
Other family member[6]	**113**	**111**	**110**	**109**	**102**	**34,226**	**98**	**34,660**	**98**	**-11**
Violations causing death[2]	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	84	0.2	104	0.3	20
Attempted murder[3]	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	65	0.2	94	0.3	33
Sexual assault[4]	16	16	15	15	13	4,437	13	4,204	12	-24
Physical assault[5]	97	95	94	93	88	29,640	85	30,258	86	-9
Total family members	**227**	**220**	**216**	**210**	**198**	**66,907**	**191**	**67,120**	**190**	**-14**
Violations causing death[2]	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	152	0.4	167	0.5	6
Attempted murder[3]	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	125	0.4	150	0.4	10
Sexual assault[4]	18	18	17	17	16	5,329	15	5,134	15	-20
Physical assault[5]	208	201	198	192	182	61,301	175	61,669	175	-13

1. Spouses include legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners.
2. Violations causing death include first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter, infanticide, criminal negligence, and other related violations causing death.
3. Includes conspire to commit murder.
4. Includes sexual assault levels 1, 2 and 3.
5. Includes assault levels 1, 2 and 3.
6. Includes children, parents, siblings, other immediate and extended family members.

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Based on the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database, which includes data from 99% of police services in Canada. As a result, the rates may not match totals presented elsewhere in the report.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database.

Table 2.10
Victims of family-related homicide, by sex of victim, Canada, 1985 to 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Year	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
1985	133	10.2	97	7.6	230	8.9
1986	111	8.4	81	6.3	192	7.4
1987	121	9.1	97	7.4	218	8.2
1988	99	7.3	75	5.6	174	6.5
1989	122	8.9	80	5.9	202	7.4
1990	107	7.7	85	6.2	192	6.9
1991	126	8.9	77	5.5	203	7.2
1992	119	8.3	80	5.7	199	7.0
1993	98	6.8	66	4.6	164	5.7
1994	105	7.2	85	5.9	190	6.6
1995	102	6.9	77	5.3	179	6.1
1996	109	7.3	80	5.5	189	6.4
1997	114	7.5	75	5.1	189	6.3
1998	103	6.8	71	4.8	174	5.8
1999	94	6.1	51	3.4	145	4.8
2000	76	4.9	57	3.8	133	4.3
2001	111	7.1	78	5.1	189	6.1
2002	115	7.3	71	4.6	186	5.9
2003	93	5.8	51	3.3	144	4.6
2004	103	6.4	62	3.9	165	5.2
2005	105	6.5	61	3.8	166	5.1
2006	95	5.8	74	4.6	169	5.2
2007	84	5.1	56	3.4	140	4.3
2008	72	4.3	71	4.3	143	4.3
2009	83	4.9	73	4.4	156	4.6
2010	80	4.7	63	3.7	143	4.2
2011	90	5.2	61	3.6	151	4.4
2012	88	5.0	61	3.5	149	4.3
2013	77	4.3	58	3.3	135	3.8
2014	91	5.1	47	2.7	138	3.9
2015	95	5.3	68	3.8	163	4.5

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 1 million population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family-related homicide refers to homicide committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and other family members. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Section 3: Police-reported intimate partner violence

by Marta Burczycka

The impacts of intimate partner violence on victims, witnesses and society as a whole have been well-documented in research and have gained attention from those responsible for justice and public health policy (Golding 1999; Campbell 2002). In Canada, self-reported data have shown that violence in spousal and dating relationships affects hundreds of thousands of people and results in both physical and psychological injuries (Burczycka 2016). In his 2016 Report on the State of Public Health in Canada, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer identified addressing intimate partner violence as being part of a strategy towards improving multigenerational health, social and economic outcomes of Canadians (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016).

Intimate partner violence includes violence against spouses and dating partners in current and former relationships. Spouses are defined as current or former legally married, separated, divorced, and common-law partners, while dating relationships include current or former boyfriends and girlfriends as well as "other" intimate relationships (sexual relationships or situations involving mutual sexual attraction which were not considered to be boyfriend/girlfriend relationships). While spousal violence has been a focus of researchers and policymakers for some time, interest in violence within intimate relationships outside marriage and common-law unions is growing. This section presents data and analysis of violence within this broader spectrum of intimate relationships.

In this section, intimate partner violence includes police-reported violent *Criminal Code* offences committed against victims aged 15 years and over within an intimate relationship. Using data from the 2015 Uniform Crime Reporting and Homicide surveys, information provided in this section includes analysis of the sex and age of victims, the relationship between victims and accused, the types of violence committed, weapons present during the violent act, as well as some comparisons between victims of spousal violence and victims of other forms of intimate partner violence. A geographic breakdown of intimate partner violence is also presented, as well as trend analysis of select offences against intimate partners, including homicides.

This section covers all types of violent *Criminal Code* offences that came to the attention of police, ranging from uttering threats and physical and sexual violence to homicide. Non-violent crimes such as theft and fraud, all types of abuse which were not substantiated by police, as well as conduct which is not covered by the *Criminal Code* are not included in this section. Additionally, analysis based on Homicide Survey data excludes homicides which have not been solved by police.

While this section provides important contextual information on incidents of family violence which come to the attention of police, it may underestimate the true extent of intimate partner violence in Canada. For example, results from the 2014 General Social Survey showed that when it came to spousal violence, seven in ten victims indicated that the police had never been made aware of the violence. Most often, victims of spousal violence indicated that they did not report the violence to police because they saw the abuse as a private matter. For those victims who did report spousal violence to the police, the majority did so because they wanted to stop the violence and receive protection (Burczycka 2016).

Unless otherwise specified, all rates shown in this section are per 100,000 population. Definitions and information on data sources and survey methodology can be found in the 'Survey description' section at the end of this publication.

Highlights

Intimate partners accused in one-third of police-reported violent crime

- In 2015, almost 92,000 people in Canada were victims of intimate partner violence, representing just over a quarter (28%) of all victims of police-reported violent crime. Four out of five victims of police-reported intimate partner violence were women (79%)—representing about 72,000 female victims (Table 3.1).
- Victimization by an intimate partner was the most common form of police-reported violent crime committed against females (42% of female victims, compared to 12% of male victims). In contrast, more males relative to females were victimized by a friend or an acquaintance (40% versus 28%) or by a stranger (36% versus 15%) (Table 3.1).
- In 2015, violence within dating relationships was more common than violence within spousal relationships, according to police reported data. A current or former dating partner was the perpetrator against 54% of intimate partner violence victims, compared to a current or former legally married or common-law spouse (44% of victims). These proportions were similar among male and female victims (Table 3.1).
- Police-reported intimate partner violence was more prevalent in current relationships than in relationships that had ended: a current dating partner (34%) or current spouse (32%) was implicated more often than a former dating partner (20%) or former spouse (12%). These proportions were similar among male and female victims (Table 3.1).

Younger victims of intimate partner violence more often victimized by current, former dating partners

- A current dating partner was most often the perpetrator against young victims of intimate partner violence: 51% of victims aged 15 to 19 years and 46% of victims aged 20 to 24 years were victimized by a current dating partner. These age groups were also more often victimized by former dating partners. According to the 2011 Census of Population, individuals in these age groups are less likely to be married or divorced (Milan 2013), thereby making their risk of spousal violence lower in proportion to dating violence (Table 3.2).
- Those aged 65 years and older had the highest proportion of victimization by a current spouse, with 7 out of 10 (68%) intimate partner victims in this age group having been victimized by their current husband, wife or common-law partner. Census data for 2011 show that individuals aged 65 and older were married or in common-law relationships more often than in other kinds of relationships (Milan 2013), making their relative risk for spousal violence higher than for other types of intimate partner violence (Table 3.2).

Physical assault most common type of victimization among intimate partner violence victims

- Physical assault (77%) was the most common offence experienced by victims of police-reported intimate partner violence in 2015. While almost 9 in 10 male victims of intimate partner violence experienced physical assault (86%), the overall majority of intimate partner physical assault victims were women (76% of all victims) (Table 3.3).
- Sexual assault by an intimate partner was ten times more common among female victims of intimate partner violence (4%) than male victims (0.4%). Female victims were also more likely than males to have experienced uttering threats (8% versus 6%) or criminal harassment (7% versus 4%) (Table 3.3).
- The type of violence most often experienced by police-reported intimate partner violence victims was physical force, such as pushing, hitting or choking (71%). Weapons such as knives, firearms, and others were less common (14%). Threats without physical force or a weapon present were reported in 15% of incidents. These proportions were similar for both spousal and intimate partner violence (Table 3.4).
- In 2015, most police-reported intimate partner violence was cleared[1] by police through the laying or recommendation of a charge (72%). An additional 14% of victims of intimate partner violence were involved in incidents which were cleared by means other than the laying of a charge, such as in cases where the victim requested that charges not be laid (6%). The remaining 14% of victims were involved in incidents which were not cleared (Table 3.5).

Lowest rates of intimate partner violence reported in Prince Edward Island and Ontario

- In 2015, Canada's rate of police-reported intimate partner violence was 309 per 100,000 population. Among the provinces, the highest rates were reported in Saskatchewan (666 per 100,000) and Manitoba (554), while Prince Edward Island (197) and Ontario (226) recorded the lowest (Table 3.6).
- As with police-reported crime in general (Allen 2016), rates of intimate partner violence were highest in the territories. Nunavut had the highest rate of police-reported intimate partner violence in Canada (3,575 per 100,000 population), more than five times that of the highest provincial rate (Saskatchewan, 666) (Table 3.6).
- Although women across Canada were generally at a higher risk of intimate partner violence than men, the difference was greatest in Nunavut (where rates against women were almost 7 times greater than those against men) and Prince Edward Island (where they were over 5 times greater). Rates of intimate partner violence involving male victims were lowest in Prince Edward Island (61 per 100,000) and highest in the Northwest Territories (969) (Table 3.6).

Rate of intimate partner sexual assaults up 15% since 2010

- The rate of intimate partner physical assault (the most common type of police-reported intimate partner violence) increased slightly between 2014 and 2015 (+2%), from 231 victims per 100,000 population to 235. Since 2010, however, the rate of this kind of intimate partner violence has declined by 8% (Table 3.7).
- In 2015, the rate of police-reported intimate partner sexual assaults was 7% higher than in 2014 and 15% higher than in 2010, reaching a rate of 9 victims per 100,000 population. Sexual assault was the only type of police-reported intimate partner physical and sexual assault to see a rate increase between 2010 and 2015 (Table 3.7).
- The rate of intimate partner sexual assault was 36 times higher among women than men (18 victims per 100,000 versus 0.5), according to police-reported data for 2015 (Table 3.7).

Females 25 to 29 years old at the highest risk of intimate partner homicide

- The rate of intimate partner homicide decreased by 6% between 2014 and 2015, continuing a decades-long trend of decline. The rate of 2.7 intimate partner homicides per 1 million people recorded in 2015 represented a 46% drop since 1995 and a 23% drop since 2005 (Table 3.8).
- The decrease in intimate partner homicides has been especially pronounced among male victims. The rate recorded in 2015 (0.9 male victims per 1 million population) represented a 70% decrease since 1995 and a 24% decrease since 2005. Women continued to be at a higher risk of intimate partner homicide, with a rate about five times higher than that of men in 2015 (4.5 versus 0.9 victims per 1 million) (Table 3.8).
- Of the 964 intimate partner homicides between 2005 and 2015, most were committed by a current or former legally married or common-law spouse (74%). Since 2005, the proportion of intimate partner homicides committed by a current or former legally married spouse versus the proportion committed by a current or former common-law partner has fluctuated at times but remained generally stable, despite the general decrease of people with current or former legal marriages (Milan 2013) (Table 3.9).
- According to police-reported data on homicides occurring between 2005 and 2015, females aged 25 to 29 years were at the highest risk of intimate partner homicide (8.2 per 1 million population). Men in this age group were also at the highest risk among males (2.5 per 1 million), though their rates of intimate partner homicide remained considerably lower than those of women (Table 3.10).
- For women, the lowest risk of intimate partner homicide was among those aged 65 and over (2.0 per 1 million), while men aged 15 to 19 were at the lowest risk (0.2). Female victims in the latter age group were 14 times more likely to be victims of intimate partner homicide than their male counterparts (2.9 female victims per 1 million population) (Table 3.10).
- The gap in risk between females and males was smallest among those aged 55 to 59, among whom females were still twice as likely to be victims of intimate partner homicide (2.9 per million, compared to 1.6 per million among men) (Table 3.10).

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Notes

1. Police can respond to a family violence incident in one of three ways: police may charge the accused, clear the incident in another way, (i.e. through departmental discretion, reasons beyond the control of police department, or request by complainant for charges not be laid), or not clear the incident because of insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.

Detailed data tables

Table 3.1
Victims of police-reported violent crime, by sex of victim and relationship of accused to victim, Canada, 2015

Relationship of accused to victim	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Intimate partner	72,403	42	19,440	12	91,843	28
Current spouse[1]	23,312	13	6,257	4	29,569	9
Former spouse[2]	8,619	5	2,316	1	10,935	3
Current dating partner[3]	24,950	14	6,623	4	31,573	10
Former dating partner[4]	14,412	8	3,646	2	18,058	5
Other intimate partner[5]	1,110	0.6	598	0.4	1,708	0.5
Non-spousal family member[6]	26,021	15	19,581	12	45,602	14
Friend or acquaintance	47,819	28	62,965	40	110,784	33
Casual acquaintance[7]	31,053	18	40,418	25	71,471	22
Business relationship	4,826	3	7,006	4	11,832	4
Close friend[8]	7,392	4	7,976	5	15,368	5
Criminal relationship[9]	321	0.2	1,511	0.9	1,832	0.6
Authority figure[10]	4,227	2	6,054	4	10,281	3
Stranger	26,467	15	57,083	36	83,550	25
Unknown relationship[11]	704	...	207	...	911	...
Total	**173,414**	**100**	**159,276**	**100**	**332,690**	**100**

... not applicable
1. Refers to violence committed by currently married persons and current common-law partners. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
2. Refers to violence committed by separated or divorced persons and former common-law partners. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
3. Refers to violence committed by current boyfriend or girlfriend. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
4. Refers to violence committed by former boyfriends or girlfriends. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
5. Refers to violence committed by a person with whom the victim had a sexual relationship or a mutual sexual attraction. Includes victims ages 15 to 89.
6. Includes all other family members related by blood, marriage (including common-law) or adoption. Examples include grandchildren, uncles, aunts, cousins and in-laws.
7. Includes neighbours.
8. Includes roommates, which was added as a relationship category in 2013.
9. Refers to relationships with the victim that are based on illegal activities, such as drugs or prostitution.
10. Refers to persons in a position of authority or trust who are not a family member. 'Reverse authority figures' was added as a relationship category beginning in 2013.
11. Refers to incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was reported by police as 'unknown.'
Note: Intimate partner violence victims under the age of 15 years are included in the category 'unknown relationship' and not in the categories related to intimate partner violence. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages have been calculated excluding victims where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3.2
Victims of police-reported intimate partner violence, by type of intimate partner relationship and age group of victim, Canada, 2015

	Victims of spousal violence[1]		Victims of dating violence[2]		Victims of other intimate partner violence[3]	Total victims of intimate partner violence
	Current	Former	Current	Former		
Age group of victim	percent					
15 to 19 years	10	7	51	30	2	100
20 to 24 years	21	8	46	24	2	100
25 to 29 years	28	11	37	22	2	100
30 to 34 years	35	13	32	19	2	100
35 to 39 years	39	16	27	17	2	100
40 to 44 years	41	16	26	15	2	100
45 to 49 years	42	14	27	16	2	100
50 to 54 years	43	14	26	15	2	100
55 to 59 years	50	13	21	13	3	100
60 to 64 years	53	14	17	12	4	100
65 years and older	68	9	12	8	3	100
	number					
Total	**29,569**	**10,935**	**31,573**	**18,058**	**1,708**	**91,843**

1. Refers to violence committed by married, separated or divorced persons and common-law partners (current and former). Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
2. Refers to violence committed by boyfriends or girlfriends (current and former). Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
3. Refers to violence committed by a person with whom the victim had a sexual relationship or a mutual sexual attraction. Includes victims ages 15 to 89.

Note: Intimate partner violence refers to violence committed by legally married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Victims refer to those aged 15 to 89. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3.3
Victims of police-reported intimate partner violence, by sex of victim and type of offence, Canada, 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Type of offence	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Violations causing death[1]	70	0.1	14	0.1	84	0.1
Attempted murder[2]	74	0.1	34	0.2	108	0.1
Sexual offences	2,976	4	96	0.5	3,072	3
Sexual assault (levels 1, 2 and 3)[3]	2,699	4	72	0.4	2,771	3
Other sexual offences[4]	277	0.4	24	0.1	301	0.3
Physical assault	54,072	75	16,778	86	70,850	77
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)[5]	8,880	12	3,970	20	12,850	14
Common assault (level 1)[6]	44,874	62	12,761	66	57,635	63
Other assaults[7]	318	0.4	47	0.2	365	0.4
Criminal harassment	5,204	7	767	4	5,971	7
Indecent or harassing phone calls	1,232	2	350	2	1,582	2
Uttering threats	5,795	8	1,148	6	6,943	8
Robbery	286	0.4	63	0.3	349	0.4
Other violent offences[8]	2,694	4	190	1	2,884	3
Total	**72,403**	**100**	**19,440**	**100**	**91,843**	**100**

1. Violations causing death include first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter, infanticide, criminal negligence causing death, and other related violations causing death.
2. Attempted murder includes conspiracy to commit murder.
3. Level 1 sexual assault is the category of least physical injury to the victim; level 2 includes sexual assault with a weapon, threats to use a weapon, or causing bodily harm; and level 3 includes aggravated sexual assault which wounds, maims, disfigures, or endangers the life of the victim.
4. Other sexual offences include other sexual crimes such as non-consensual distribution of intimate images, sexual interference, sexual exploitation, luring a child via a computer, and voyeurism.
5. Level 2 assault is defined as assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm and level 3 assault is defined as assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.
6. Level 1 assault is the least serious form of assault and includes pushing, slapping, punching and face-to-face verbal threats.
7. Other assaults include unlawfully causing bodily harm, pointing, using or discharging a firearm with intent, assault against a public or peace officer, trap likely causing bodily harm and other assaults.
8. Other violent offences include forcible confinement, kidnapping, extortion, and other violent offences.

Note: Intimate partner violence refers to violence committed by legally married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Victims refer to those aged 15 to 89. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3.4
Victims of police-reported intimate partner violence, by type of intimate partner relationship and type of weapon present, Canada, 2015

Type of weapon present	Victims of spousal violence[1]		Victims of dating violence[2]		Total victims of intimate partner violence[3]	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Threats (no weapon)[4]	5,071	14	7,570	15	12,641	15
Physical force	26,431	72	35,258	71	61,689	71
Weapon	5,272	14	6,696	14	11,968	14
Firearm	282	0.8	348	0.7	630	0.7
Knife or other piercing instrument[5]	1,648	4	2,072	4	3,720	4
Club or other blunt instrument	786	2	816	2	1,602	2
Other weapon[6]	2,556	7	3,460	7	6,016	7
Unknown	3,730	...	1,815	...	5,545	...
Total	**40,504**	**100**	**51,339**	**100**	**91,843**	**100**

... not applicable
1. Refers to violence committed by married, separated or divorced persons and common-law partners (current and former). Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
2. Refers to violence committed by boyfriends or girlfriends (current and former) and other intimate partners. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
3. Refers to violence committed by married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former) and other intimate partners. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
4. Includes threats that are construed to imply that death or injury is possible.
5. Includes other piercing/cutting instruments, such as a hatchet, razor blade or arrow.
6. Includes other types of weapons such as explosives, fire, motor vehicles, poison and weapons not otherwise classified.
Note: Intimate partner violence refers to violence committed by legally married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Victims refer to those aged 15 to 89. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages have been calculated excluding unknown type of weapon. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3.5
Victims of police-reported intimate partner violence, by type of intimate partner relationship and type of clearance status, Canada, 2015

Type of clearance status	Victims of spousal violence[1]		Victims of dating violence[2]		Total victims of intimate partner violence[3]	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Not cleared[4]	4,782	12	7,718	15	12,500	14
Cleared by charge	28,324	70	37,703	73	66,027	72
Cleared otherwise	7,398	18	5,918	12	13,316	14
Complainant requests charges not to be laid	2,892	7	3,023	6	5,915	6
Reasons beyond the control of department	3,199	8	774	2	3,973	4
Departmental discretion	1,105	3	1,836	4	2,941	3
Other[5]	202	0.5	285	0.6	487	0.5
Total	**40,504**	**100**	**51,339**	**100**	**91,843**	**100**

1. Refers to violence committed by married, separated or divorced persons and common-law partners (current and former). Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
2. Refers to violence committed by boyfriends or girlfriends (current and former) and other intimate partners. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
3. Refers to violence committed by married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former) and other intimate partners. Includes victims aged 15 to 89.
4. 'Not cleared' refers to incidents where an accused person has not been identified in connection with the incident or incidents where there is insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.
5. 'Cleared by other means' includes suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, accused is less than 12 years of age, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, accused already sentenced, diversionary programs, incident cleared by a lesser statute, incident cleared by other municipal/provincial/federal agency.
Note: Intimate partner violence refers to violence committed by legally married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Victims refer to those aged 15 to 89. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. In cases of domestic violence, every Canadian jurisdiction has implemented some form of pro-charging policies. The particular parameters of these pro-charging policies can vary regionally.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3.6
Victims of police-reported intimate partner violence, by sex of victim and province or territory, 2015

Province or territory	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,109	486	343	155	1,452	323
Prince Edward Island	204	325	36	61	240	197
Nova Scotia	1,745	425	553	141	2,298	286
New Brunswick	1,649	510	473	150	2,122	332
Quebec	15,643	451	4,647	136	20,290	295
Ontario	20,752	355	5,177	92	25,929	226
Manitoba	4,594	896	1,045	207	5,639	554
Saskatchewan	4,825	1,086	1,151	254	5,976	666
Alberta	10,666	636	2,987	172	13,653	400
British Columbia	9,437	472	2,660	136	12,097	305
Yukon	277	1,812	71	452	348	1,122
Northwest Territories	719	4,250	171	969	890	2,575
Nunavut	783	6,402	126	955	909	3,575
Canada	**72,403**	**482**	**19,440**	**132**	**91,843**	**309**

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population aged 15 and over. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Intimate partner violence refers to violence committed by legally married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Victims refer to those aged 15 to 89. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3.7
Victims of police-reported intimate partner violence for selected violent offences, by sex of victim and type of offence, Canada, 2009 to 2015

Type of offence	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014		2015		Percent change of rate from 2010 to 2015
			rate			number	rate	number	rate	percent
Male victims	**116**	**115**	**116**	**116**	**112**	**16,184**	**112**	**16,647**	**114**	**-0.7**
Attempted murder[1]	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	33	0.2	34	0.2	19
Physical assault	115	114	115	116	111	16,088	111	16,541	113	-0.8
Common assault (level 1)	87	86	87	89	85	12,190	84	12,637	86	0.4
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)	28	28	28	27	27	3,898	27	3,904	27	-5
Sexual assault	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	63	0.4	72	0.5	39
Sexual assault (level 1)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	51	0.4	57	0.4	49
Sexual assault (levels 2 and 3)	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.05	12	0.1	15	0.1	9
Female victims	**419**	**409**	**408**	**395**	**374**	**54,110**	**365**	**55,754**	**373**	**-9**
Attempted murder[1]	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	68	0.5	73	0.5	-9
Physical assault	404	393	392	378	358	51,582	348	53,023	354	-10
Common assault (level 1)	344	333	330	318	301	43,295	292	44,311	296	-11
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)	60	61	61	60	57	8,287	56	8,712	58	-4
Sexual assault	14	15	16	17	16	2,460	17	2,658	18	15
Sexual assault (level 1)	13	15	15	16	15	2,346	16	2,537	17	17
Sexual assault (levels 2 and 3)	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	1	114	0.8	121	0.8	-15
Total victims	**269**	**264**	**264**	**257**	**245**	**70,294**	**240**	**72,401**	**245**	**-7**
Attempted murder[1]	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	101	0.3	107	0.4	-2
Physical assault	261	255	255	248	236	67,670	231	69,564	235	-8
Common assault (level 1)	217	211	210	204	194	55,485	189	56,948	192	-9
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)	44	45	45	44	42	12,185	42	12,616	43	-4
Sexual assault	7	8	8	9	8	2,523	9	2,730	9	15
Sexual assault (level 1)	7	7	8	8	8	2,397	8	2,594	9	17
Sexual assault (levels 2 and 3)	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	126	0.4	136	0.5	-13

1. Attempted murder includes conspiracy to commit murder.
Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population aged 15 and over. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Intimate partner violence refers to violence committed by legally married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Victims refer to those aged 15 to 89. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Based on the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database, which includes data from 99% of police services in Canada. As a result, the rates may not match totals presented elsewhere in the report.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database.

Table 3.8
Victims of intimate partner homicide, by sex of victim, Canada, 1995 to 2015

Year	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
1995	85	7.1	33	2.9	118	5.1
1996	82	6.8	30	2.6	112	4.7
1997	79	6.5	19	1.6	98	4.1
1998	67	5.4	14	1.2	81	3.3
1999	77	6.2	14	1.2	91	3.7
2000	74	5.9	20	1.6	94	3.8
2001	81	6.3	24	1.9	105	4.2
2002	80	6.2	23	1.8	103	4.0
2003	73	5.6	17	1.3	90	3.5
2004	77	5.8	21	1.6	98	3.7
2005	79	5.9	15	1.1	94	3.5
2006	70	5.1	26	2.0	96	3.6
2007	60	4.3	23	1.7	83	3.0
2008	64	4.6	25	1.8	89	3.2
2009	69	4.8	22	1.6	91	3.2
2010	63	4.4	27	1.9	90	3.2
2011	80	5.5	14	1.0	94	3.3
2012	70	4.7	16	1.1	86	3.0
2013	59	3.9	14	1.0	73	2.5
2014	70	4.6	16	1.1	86	2.9
2015	69	4.5	13	0.9	82	2.7

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 1 million population aged 15 and over. Populations are based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Intimate partner homicide refers to homicides committed by legally married, separated and divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Excludes victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Data on homicides between dating partners are not available prior to 1991. The Homicide Survey was revised and expanded in 1991 to better meet changing information needs.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 3.9
Victims of intimate partner homicide, by type of intimate partner relationship, Canada, 2005 to 2015

Year	Spousal homicide victims						Dating homicide victims[4]		Same-sex intimate partner homicide victims[5]		Total victims—intimate partner homicides[6]	
	Victims of a married spouse[1]		Victims of a common-law partner[2]		Total—spousal homicide victims[3]							
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
2005	35	37	41	44	76	81	17	18	1	1	94	100
2006	40	42	39	41	79	82	14	15	3	3	96	100
2007	28	34	35	42	63	76	16	19	4	5	83	100
2008	37	42	25	28	62	70	24	27	3	3	89	100
2009	34	37	32	35	66	73	23	25	2	2	91	100
2010	24	27	40	44	64	71	23	26	3	3	90	100
2011	33	35	33	35	66	70	22	23	6	6	94	100
2012	38	44	25	29	63	73	19	22	4	5	86	100
2013	22	30	24	33	46	63	25	34	2	3	73	100
2014	33	38	31	36	64	74	19	22	3	3	86	100
2015	20	24	43	52	63	77	18	22	1	1	82	100
2005 to 2015	**344**	**36**	**368**	**38**	**712**	**74**	**220**	**23**	**32**	**3**	**964**	**100**

1. Includes victims of a married, separated or divorced opposite sex spouse.
2. Includes victims of an opposite sex common-law partner (current or former).
3. Includes victims of a married, separated or divorced opposite sex spouse or an opposite sex common-law partner.
4. Includes victims of an opposite sex boyfriend or girlfriend (current or former) or another opposite sex intimate partner.
5. Includes victims of a married, separated or divorced same-sex spouse and a same-sex common-law partner (current or former) as well as a same-sex boyfriend or girlfriend (current or former) and same-sex other intimate partner.
6. Includes victims of a married, separated or divorced persons, common-law partners, dating partners (current and former) and other intimate partners.

Note: Intimate partner homicide refers to homicides committed by legally married, separated and divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Excludes victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Data on homicides between dating partners are not available prior to 1991. The Homicide Survey was revised and expanded in 1991 to better meet changing information needs.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 3.10
Victims of intimate partner homicide, by sex of victim and age group of victim, Canada, 2005 to 2015

	Female victims	Male victims
Age group of victim	rate	
15 to 19 years	2.9	0.2
20 to 24 years	6.4	0.9
25 to 29 years	8.2	2.5
30 to 34 years	6.1	1.9
35 to 39 years	7.8	1.7
40 to 44 years	6.4	2.0
45 to 49 years	5.6	2.0
50 to 54 years	4.3	1.7
55 to 59 years	2.9	1.6
60 to 64 years	3.0	0.9
65 years and older	2.0	0.3

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 1 million population aged 15 and over. Populations are based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Intimate partner homicide refers to homicides committed by legally married, separated and divorced persons, common-law partners (current and former), dating partners (current and former), and other intimate partners. Excludes victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Data on homicides between dating partners are not available prior to 1991. The Homicide Survey was revised and expanded in 1991 to better meet changing information needs.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Section 4: Police-reported family violence against children and youth

by Shana Conroy

Child maltreatment, including abuse and neglect, has serious short- and long-term implications and may have physical and emotional impacts on the health, development and survival of victims (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016). While this issue is complex and it is challenging to determine its true scope, it is estimated that globally, during childhood, one-quarter of adults experienced physical abuse and 20% of women and 8% of men experienced sexual abuse (World Health Organization 2016). Identified as a major global public health concern by experts, measuring the prevalence of child maltreatment is particularly challenging as many young victims may be unaware that they are being victimized, may not know how to seek help or may be unable to report their victimization (United Nations 2006; Ogrodnik 2010; Kuoppamäki et al. 2011). At the societal-level, the economic impact of family violence is high; it is estimated that violence against children and youth costs $16 billion each year in Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016). This includes social services, health, educational and judicial services; however, the largest cost is related to employment and lost earnings.

According to self-reported data from the 2014 General Social Survey, one-third (33%) of Canadians over the age of 15 in the provinces reported that they had experienced physical and/or sexual abuse as a child by family or non-family members (see Section 1 of this report). Childhood physical abuse was reported by 26% of Canadians, while 8% reported sexual abuse. Family violence against children and youth, where the perpetrator is a family member or relative and there is an expected relationship of trust or dependence, can have especially serious consequences for victims. Within a family context, immediate and lifelong impacts on victims may include insecure attachment, self-blame, anxiety, dissociation and developmental delay (Royal Canadian Mounted Police 2012). Violence against children and youth may put them at risk for future unhealthy behaviours such as substance abuse and unprotected sex (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016). These impacts may be further compounded if the cycle of violence repeats intergenerationally.

Using data from the 2015 Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the 2015 Homicide Survey, this section presents information on police-reported family violence against children and youth under the age of 18. The following analysis highlights the prevalence of violent offences against children and youth where the perpetrator is a family member. The information includes type of offence, relationship to the perpetrator and geographical location. Trend analysis of select police-reported violent offences against children and youth is also presented to indicate changes over time.

This section includes all types of violent offences under the *Criminal Code* that were reported to police in 2015, ranging from uttering threats to physical and sexual violence to homicide. Non-violent crimes such as theft and fraud, abuses unsubstantiated by police, and other forms of conduct not covered by the *Criminal Code* are not included in this section. In addition, analysis based on the Homicide Survey excludes homicides that have not been solved by police. While this section provides important contextual information on the incidence of police-reported family violence, the true extent of offences against children and youth in Canada may be underestimated since the data presented here include only incidents of violence that have come to the attention of police and that are covered by the *Criminal Code*. According to the 2014 General Social Survey, 93% of Canadians 15 and older who reported that they had experienced child abuse did not report the abuse to authorities—police or child protective services—before they turned 15.

Unless otherwise specified, all rates in this section are per 100,000 population. Information on data sources, survey methodology and definitions can be found in the 'Survey description' section.

Highlights

Three in five child and youth victims of police-reported family violence were victimized by a parent

- In 2015, there were about 53,500 child and youth victims (under the age of 18) of police-reported violent crime in Canada. Children and youth represented 16% of all victims of violent crime (Table 4.1).
- Among child and youth victims, approximately 16,100 (30%) were victims of family violence perpetrated by a parent, sibling, extended family member or spouse. The majority of these victims (58%) were victimized by a parent (Table 4.2).
- Victimization by a parent was most common among the youngest victims (under one year of age) (84%) of family violence. This decreased with age, dropping to 48% for youth aged 12 to 17 (Table 4.2).
- Rates of family violence were highest for youth (between 12 and 17 years of age) while very young children (under one year of age) had the lowest. However, as previously stated, it is important to note that abuse of the youngest victims may go unreported for a variety of reasons (United Nations 2006; Ogrodnik 2010; Kuoppamäki et al. 2011) (Table 4.3).
- Female children and youth were more often victims of police-reported family violence than their male counterparts (a rate of 281 and 187 per 100,000 population, respectively) (Table 4.3).

- The age at which female and male children and youth were most often victimized by a family member (495 and 252, respectively) was at age 15. Of note, female youth between 14 and 16 years of age were twice as likely as their male counterparts to be victimized by a family member (Table 4.3).
- Nearly half (45%) of police-reported family violence incidents against children and youth were cleared[1] by the laying or recommendation of a charge against the accused. Another 27% of incidents of family violence were cleared by other means, such as departmental discretion (9%). The remaining 28% of incidents of family violence were not cleared because of insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incidents (Table 4.4).

Police-reported family-related sexual offences more than four times higher for female children and youth

- In 2015, physical assault was the most common type of police-reported family violence against children and youth (a rate of 134 per 100,000 population), followed by sexual offences (72) such as sexual assault and sexual interference (Table 4.5).
- While rates of physical assault against children and youth perpetrated by a family member were similar for females and males, the rate of sexual offences against female children and youth was 4.5 times higher than that for their male counterparts (119 versus 27) (Table 4.5).
- As has been the case in the past, kidnapping and abduction were relatively rare occurrences among police-reported incidents of family violence. Specifically, there were 353 child and youth victims of kidnapping and abduction (a rate of 5 per 100,000 population) (Table 4.5).
- Of the 307 child and youth victims of family-related homicide between 2005 and 2015, the most common causes of death were beating (25%), strangulation, suffocation or drowning (24%), and stabbing (17%). Half (50%) of child and youth victims were three years of age or younger (Table 4.6).
- The most common motive for family-related homicide over the past decade was frustration, anger or despair (60%). For nearly one in ten (9%) family-related homicides against children and youth, police found no apparent motive (Table 4.7).

Police-reported family violence against children and youth highest in the territories and Saskatchewan, lowest in Ontario

- Similar to crime in general in 2015 (Allen 2016), rates of family violence against children and youth in the territories were higher than in the provinces. Nunavut had the highest rate of police-reported family violence (1,469 per 100,000 population), followed by the Northwest Territories (917) and Yukon (643). In the provinces, the rate of police-reported family violence against children and youth was highest in Saskatchewan (465) and lowest in Ontario (156) (Table 4.8).
- Of the census metropolitan areas (CMAs), Saguenay reported the highest rate (495) of police-reported family violence against children and youth, while Ottawa and Guelph reported the lowest (82 and 111, respectively). Overall, the rate of police-reported family violence against children and youth was lower in the CMAs (186) than in non-CMAs (325) (Table 4.9).

Family-related sexual assault against children and youth declines for female and male victims

- Between 2010 and 2015, common physical assault (level 1) was the most common type of police-reported family violence against children and youth, despite an overall rate decrease of 18% over the same time period. The rate of common assault due to family violence decreased by 22% for female children and youth and 13% for their male counterparts (Table 4.10).
- Over the past six years, sexual assault (level 1) accounted for nearly all (99%) family-related sexual assault against children and youth. The rate of family-related sexual assault (level 1) against children and youth overall declined by one-fifth (-21%) over the same time period (Table 4.10).
- From 2010 to 2015, rates of family-related sexual assault (level 1) against children and youth were approximately four times higher among female victims. Over this time period, police-reported rates declined by 21% for both females and males (Table 4.10).

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Notes

1. Police can respond to a family violence incident in one of three ways: charge the accused, clear the incident in another way (e.g. through departmental discretion, reasons beyond the control of police department, or complainant request for charges not be laid), or not clear the incident because of insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.

Detailed data tables

Table 4.1
Victims of police-reported violent crime, by age group of victim and type of offence, Canada, 2015

	Adult victims (18 years and older)		Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years)		Child and youth victims by age group							
					Less than 3 years		3 to 11 years		12 to 17 years		Total victims	
Type of offence	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Violations causing death/attempted murder/conspiracy to commit murder	**1,370**	**5**	**115**	**2**	**24**	**2**	**21**	**0.6**	**70**	**3**	**1,485**	**4**
Murder, manslaughter, infanticide	551	2	48	0.7	19	2	8	0.2	21	0.9	599	2
Criminal negligence causing death	67	0.2	10	0.1	1	0.1	0	0	9	0.4	77	0.2
Other related offences causing death	7	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0.02
Attempted murder or conspiracy to commit murder	745	3	57	0.8	4	0.3	13	0.4	40	2	802	2
Sexual offences	**12,299**	**43**	**13,737**	**199**	**186**	**16**	**4,873**	**141**	**8,678**	**376**	**26,036**	**73**
Sexual assault (level 3) - aggravated	83	0.3	17	0.2	0	0	2	0.1	15	0.7	100	0.3
Sexual assault (level 2) - weapon or causing bodily harm	276	1	93	1	0	0	23	0.7	70	3	369	1
Sexual assault (level 1)	11,273	40	9,262	134	123	11	3,046	88	6,093	264	20,535	58
Sexual interference	...	...	2,553	37	49	4	1,340	39	1,164	50	2,553	7
Invitation to sexual touching	...	...	458	7	3	0.3	200	6	255	11	458	1
Luring a child via a computer	...	...	659	10	0	0	113	3	546	24	659	2
Incest	40	0.1	183	3	5	0.4	78	2	100	4	223	0.6
Sexual exploitation	16	0.1	145	2	0	0	0	0	145	6	161	0.5
Voyeurism	395	1	153	2	2	0.2	27	0.8	124	5	548	2
Non-consensual distribution of intimate images	193	0.7	91	1	0	0	4	0.1	87	4	284	0.8
Other sexual offences[1]	23	0.1	123	2	4	0.3	40	1	79	3	146	0.4
Assaults	**187,173**	**656**	**27,386**	**396**	**850**	**74**	**6,796**	**197**	**19,740**	**856**	**214,559**	**605**
Assault (level 3) - aggravated	3,002	11	238	3	40	3	20	0.6	178	8	3,240	9
Assault (level 2) - weapon or causing bodily harm	40,592	142	5,858	85	198	17	1,412	41	4,248	184	46,450	131
Assault (level 1)	132,961	466	20,872	302	574	50	5,275	153	15,023	652	153,833	434
Pointing a firearm	563	2	119	2	3	0.3	25	0.7	91	4	682	2
Unlawfully causing bodily harm	342	1	36	0.5	2	0.2	1	0.03	33	1	378	1
Criminal negligence causing bodily harm	136	0.5	63	0.9	15	1	19	0.6	29	1	199	0.6
Using firearm or imitation firearm in commission of offence	142	0.5	21	0.3	1	0.1	3	0.1	17	0.7	163	0.5
Discharge firearm with intent	322	1	62	0.9	7	0.6	12	0.3	43	2	384	1
Other assaults[2]	9,113	32	117	2	10	0.9	29	0.8	78	3	9,230	26
Deprivation of freedom	**3,124**	**11**	**760**	**11**	**77**	**7**	**331**	**10**	**352**	**15**	**3,884**	**11**
Kidnapping and forcible confinement	3,124	11	379	5	21	2	72	2	286	12	3,503	10
Abduction or removal of child from Canada	...	...	381	6	56	5	259	8	66	3	381	1
Other violent offences	**75,081**	**263**	**11,572**	**167**	**364**	**32**	**1,610**	**47**	**9,598**	**416**	**86,653**	**244**
Robbery	16,626	58	3,054	44	15	1	110	3	2,929	127	19,680	56
Criminal harassment	12,144	43	1,320	19	5	0.4	158	5	1,157	50	13,464	38
Uttering threats	38,074	133	5,850	85	258	22	1,139	33	4,453	193	43,924	124
Indecent or harassing phone calls	4,717	17	423	6	3	0.3	33	1	387	17	5,140	14
Trafficking in persons	158	0.6	50	0.7	0	0	0	0	50	2	208	0.6
Other[3]	3,362	12	875	13	83	7	170	5	622	27	4,237	12
Total	**279,047**	**978**	**53,570**	**775**	**1,501**	**130**	**13,631**	**395**	**38,438**	**1,667**	**332,617**	**938**

... not applicable

1. Includes corrupting children, making sexually explicit material available to children, anal intercourse, bestiality, other unknown sexual assault, and as of December 2014, new violations classified as 'commodification of sexual activity.' These include the purchasing of sexual services or communicating for that purpose, receiving material benefit deriving from purchase of sexual services, procuring of persons for the purpose of prostitution, and advertising sexual services offered for sale.
2. Includes trap likely to cause bodily harm, assaults against police and other peace officers, as well as other types of assaults such as administering a noxious substance.
3. Other violent offences include extortion, arson—disregard for human life, intimidation of a justice system participant or journalist, intimidation of a non-justice participant, explosives causing death/bodily harm, hostage taking, and other violent violations.

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Victims refer to those aged 89 years and younger. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown. In 2015, police-reported data included 880 victims with unknown sex and 3,133 victims with unknown age. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4.2
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of police-reported family violence, by age group of victim and relationship of accused to victim, Canada, 2015

Relationship of accused to victim	Age group of victim										Total victims	
	Less than 1 year		1 to 3 years		4 to 6 years		7 to 11 years		12 to 17 years			
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Parent[1]	224	84	1,052	77	1,634	67	2,719	63	3,676	48	9,305	58
Sibling[2]	20	7	139	10	341	14	753	17	1,546	20	2,799	17
Extended family[3]	23	9	178	13	456	19	865	20	2,097	27	3,619	22
Spouse[4]	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	389	5	389	2
Total	**267**	**100**	**1,369**	**100**	**2,431**	**100**	**4,337**	**100**	**7,708**	**100**	**16,112**	**100**

... not applicable
1. Includes biological, step, adoptive and foster parents.
2. Includes biological, step, half, adoptive and foster brothers and sisters.
3. Includes all other family members related by blood, marriage or adoption. Examples include grandchildren, uncles, aunts, cousins and in-laws.
4. Includes current and former legally married and common-law spouses.

Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), extended family members and spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners). Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4.3
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and age of victim, Canada, 2015

Age of victim	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Less than 1 year	119	63	148	75	267	69
1 year	182	97	214	108	396	103
2 years	203	108	210	107	413	107
3 years	304	163	256	130	560	146
4 years	402	214	327	166	729	189
5 years	443	233	387	194	830	213
6 years	468	244	404	200	872	222
7 years	473	245	395	196	868	220
8 years	461	245	371	187	832	215
9 years	432	235	409	212	841	223
10 years	492	273	398	209	890	240
11 years	547	302	359	188	906	243
12 years	678	379	445	236	1,123	306
13 years	691	385	404	213	1,095	297
14 years	845	465	435	225	1,280	341
15 years	933	495	505	252	1,438	370
16 years	892	464	464	229	1,356	343
17 years	902	451	514	244	1,416	345
Total	**9,467**	**281**	**6,645**	**187**	**16,112**	**233**

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), extended family members and spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners). Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4.4
Child and youth (0 to 17 years) victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and type of clearance status, Canada, 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Type of clearance status	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Not cleared[1]	2,686	28	1,792	27	4,478	28
Cleared by charge	4,417	47	2,865	43	7,282	45
Cleared otherwise	2,364	25	1,988	30	4,352	27
Complainant requests charges not be laid	788	8	550	8	1,338	8
Reasons beyond the control of department	641	7	578	9	1,219	8
Departmental discretion	729	8	702	11	1,431	9
Other[2]	206	2	158	2	364	2
Total	**9,467**	**100**	**6,645**	**100**	**16,112**	**100**

1. 'Not cleared' refers to incidents where an accused person has not been identified in connection with the incident or incidents where there is insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.
2. 'Cleared by other means' includes suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, accused is less than 12 years of age, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, accused already sentenced, diversionary programs, incident cleared by a lesser statute, incident cleared by other municipal/provincial/federal agency.
Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), extended family members and spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners). Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. In cases of domestic violence, every Canadian jurisdiction has implemented some form of pro-charging policies. The particular parameters of these pro-charging policies can vary regionally.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4.5
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and type of offence, Canada, 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Type of offence	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Violations causing death[1]	13	0.4	13	0.4	26	0.4
Attempted murder[2]	13	0.4	5	0.1	18	0.3
Sexual offences[3]	4,024	119	947	27	4,971	72
Physical assault	4,484	133	4,790	135	9,274	134
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)[4]	846	25	1,046	30	1,892	27
Common assault (level 1)[5]	3,588	107	3,693	104	7,281	105
Other assaults[6]	50	1	51	1	101	1
Kidnapping or abduction	178	5	175	5	353	5
Other violent offences[7]	755	22	715	20	1,470	21
Total	**9,467**	**281**	**6,645**	**187**	**16,112**	**233**

1. Violations causing death include first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter, infanticide, criminal negligence causing death, and other related violations causing death.
2. Attempted murder includes conspiracy to commit murder.
3. Sexual offences include sexual assault levels 1, 2 and 3 and other sexual violations, including child-specific offences, such as sexual interference and luring a child via a computer.
4. Level 2 assault is defined as assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm and level 3 assault is defined as assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.
5. Level 1 assault is the least serious form of assault and includes pushing, slapping, punching and face-to-face verbal threats.
6. Other assaults include criminal negligence causing bodily harm, pointing a firearm, discharging a firearm with intent and other assaults.
7. Other violent offences include uttering threats to a person, criminal harassment, indecent or harassing communications and other violations against the person.
Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), extended family members and spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners). Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4.6
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of family-related homicide, by age group of victim and cause of death, Canada, 2005 to 2015

	Age group of victim											
	Less than 1 year		1 to 3 years		4 to 6 years		7 to 11 years		12 to 17 years		Total victims	
Cause of death	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Strangulation, suffocation or drowning	22	32	17	20	9	22	10	24	15	23	73	24
Beating	17	25	36	43	10	24	4	10	7	11	74	25
Stabbing	2	3	8	10	9	22	12	29	21	32	52	17
Shaken Baby Syndrome[1]	18	26	8	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	26	9
Shooting	0	0	5	6	3	7	6	15	13	20	27	9
Poisoning or lethal injection	1	1	2	2	4	10	2	5	3	5	12	4
Fire (smoke inhalation, burns)	0	0	3	4	2	5	5	12	2	3	12	4
Other[2]	8	12	4	5	4	10	2	5	4	6	22	7
Unknown	2	...	1	...	3	...	3	...	0	...	9	...
Total	**70**	**100**	**84**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**65**	**100**	**307**	**100**

... not applicable
1. 'Shaken Baby Syndrome' refers to homicides committed against a baby (under the age of three years) where the primary cause of death resulted from being shaken, tossed or thrown.
2. Includes causes of death not otherwise stated. Examples include deaths caused by motor vehicles, exposure/hypothermia, starvation or heat.
Note: Family-related homicide refers to homicides committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), and other family members. Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages exclude homicides where the cause of death was reported by police as unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 4.7
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of family-related homicide, by age group of victim and type of motive, Canada, 2005 to 2015

	Age group of victim											
	Less than 1 year		1 to 3 years		4 to 6 years		7 to 11 years		12 to 17 years		Total victims	
Type of motive	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Frustration, anger or despair	43	67	56	75	27	66	21	54	21	34	168	60
No apparent motive[1]	1	2	6	8	2	5	6	15	11	18	26	9
Argument or quarrel	1	2	2	3	3	7	3	8	12	19	21	7
Concealment[2]	18	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	6
Jealousy	0	0	7	9	3	7	4	10	4	6	18	6
Other[3]	1	2	0	0	3	7	2	5	11	18	17	6
Revenge	0	0	4	5	3	7	3	8	3	5	13	5
Unknown	6	...	9	...	3	...	5	...	3	...	26	...
Total	**70**	**100**	**84**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**65**	**100**	**307**	**100**

... not applicable
1. Includes, for example, mental illness and dementia.
2. Concealment includes homicides committed to hide evidence of something, for example a pregnancy or birth of a child, or evidence of another criminal offence. This is the most common motive for infanticides.
3. Other motives include financial gain, mercy killing, and sexual violence.
Note: Family-related homicide refers to homicides committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), and other family members. Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages exclude homicides where the cause of death was reported by police as unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 4.8
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and province or territory, 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Province or territory	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Newfoundland and Labrador	179	398	143	304	322	350
Prince Edward Island	33	236	23	160	56	197
Nova Scotia	249	315	152	181	401	246
New Brunswick	227	349	164	239	391	293
Quebec	2,642	358	1,940	251	4,582	304
Ontario	2,405	185	1,749	128	4,154	156
Manitoba	677	489	383	264	1,060	374
Saskatchewan	677	547	504	387	1,181	465
Alberta	1,216	272	810	172	2,026	221
British Columbia	956	235	638	148	1,594	190
Yukon	34	918	15	383	49	643
Northwest Territories	63	1,170	37	670	100	917
Nunavut	109	1,668	87	1,278	196	1,469
Canada	**9,467**	**281**	**6,645**	**187**	**16,112**	**233**

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), extended family members and spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners). Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4.9
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and census metropolitan area, 2015

Census metropolitan area (CMA)[1, 2]	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
St. John's	48	263	38	199	86	230
Halifax	81	232	57	153	138	192
Moncton	33	244	32	216	65	229
Saint John	40	334	28	222	68	276
Saguenay	73	530	66	462	139	495
Québec	228	341	170	244	398	292
Sherbrooke	40	233	27	147	67	189
Trois-Rivières	44	369	49	384	93	377
Montréal	1,067	282	785	199	1,852	240
Gatineau[3]	114	345	71	207	185	275
Ottawa[4]	93	98	65	66	158	82
Kingston	44	315	20	137	64	224
Peterborough	19	189	9	86	28	136
Toronto[5]	870	168	720	132	1,590	150
Hamilton[6]	93	182	73	134	166	158
St. Catharines–Niagara	70	180	36	87	106	132
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	95	172	67	116	162	143
Brantford	27	196	19	132	46	163
Guelph	16	126	13	98	29	111
London	91	191	47	93	138	141
Windsor	72	246	37	120	109	181
Barrie	36	162	29	124	65	143
Greater Sudbury	35	247	14	93	49	168
Thunder Bay	24	234	17	161	41	197
Winnipeg	233	290	97	116	330	201
Regina	54	216	44	168	98	191
Saskatoon	79	252	54	162	133	206
Calgary	266	180	195	125	461	151
Edmonton	341	251	206	145	547	197
Kelowna	23	142	19	112	42	127
Abbotsford–Mission	44	225	37	176	81	200
Vancouver	365	171	248	109	613	139
Victoria	54	193	45	158	99	175
CMA total[7]	**4,957**	**223**	**3,538**	**151**	**8,495**	**186**
Non-CMA total	**4,510**	**395**	**3,107**	**259**	**7,617**	**325**
Canada	**9,467**	**281**	**6,645**	**187**	**16,112**	**233**

1. A CMA consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA typically comprises more than one police service.
2. CMA populations have been adjusted to follow policing boundaries. The Oshawa CMA is excluded from this table due to the incongruity between the police service jurisdictional boundaries and the CMA boundaries.
3. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
4. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
5. Excludes the portions of Halton Regional Police and Durham Regional Police that police the CMA of Toronto.
6. Excludes the portion of Halton Regional Police that polices the CMA of Hamilton.
7. Includes Halton Regional Police and Durham Regional Police, which are responsible for policing more than one CMA. This total also includes the portion of Durham Regional Police that polices the Oshawa CMA. Because of these inclusions, the CMA total will not equal the total of the individual CMAs.

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), extended family members and spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners). Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4.10
Child and youth victims (0 to 17 years) of police-reported family violence for selected violent offences, by sex of victim and type of offence, 2009 to 2015

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014		2015		Percent change in rate from 2010 to 2015
Type of offence	rate	rate	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate	percent
Male victims										
Physical assault	150	151	151	143	135	4,602	131	4,678	133	-12
Common assault (level 1)	121	119	119	114	106	3,664	104	3,643	103	-13
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)	29	31	32	29	28	938	27	1,035	29	-6
Sexual assault	24	23	21	24	20	677	19	642	18	-21
Sexual assault (level 1)	24	23	21	24	20	669	19	635	18	-21
Sexual assault (levels 2 and 3)	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	8	0.2	7	0.2	-0.1
Female victims										
Physical assault	160	163	162	154	142	4,478	134	4,345	130	-20
Common assault (level 1)	133	134	134	125	114	3,601	108	3,517	105	-22
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)	27	29	28	29	28	877	26	828	25	-15
Sexual assault	98	102	94	93	87	2,892	87	2,684	80	-21
Sexual assault (level 1)	97	101	94	92	86	2,864	86	2,662	80	-21
Sexual assault (levels 2 and 3)	0.9	1	0.7	1	0.7	28	0.8	22	0.7	-37
Total victims										
Physical assault	155	157	156	148	138	9,080	133	9,023	131	-16
Common assault (level 1)	127	127	126	119	110	7,265	106	7,160	104	-18
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)	28	30	30	29	28	1,815	26	1,863	27	-10
Sexual assault	60	61	57	58	53	3,569	52	3,326	48	-21
Sexual assault (level 1)	60	61	56	57	52	3,533	52	3,297	48	-21
Sexual assault (levels 2 and 3)	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.4	36	0.5	29	0.4	-31

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), extended family members and spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners). Victims refer to those aged 17 years and younger. Excludes spousal victims under the age of 15 years. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes a small number of victims in Quebec whose age was unknown but was miscoded as 0. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database represents 99% of police services in Canada. As a result, the rates may not match totals presented elsewhere in the report.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database.

Section 5: Police-reported family violence against seniors

by Shana Conroy

Abuse of seniors is defined as "a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person" (World Health Organization 2002). This type of abuse can take on many forms, including neglect and physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016). In addition to economic difficulties and poverty, there can be serious psychological and physical implications for victims, such as anxiety, depression, isolation, stroke, heart attack, over- or under-medicating, and death (Royal Canadian Mounted Police n.d.).

According to population estimates, seniors aged 65 and older represent approximately 17% of the total Canadian population (Statistics Canada 2016) and are a demographic that is rapidly growing (Brennan 2012). In 2015, for the first time ever, the population over the age of 65 exceeded that of young people under 15 years of age. As the senior population in Canada continues to expand, the issue of senior abuse has emerged as an increasingly important issue: while an estimated 4 to 10% of seniors experience abuse, only 20% of incidents are reported to someone who is able to help (Public Health Agency of Canada n.d.). Certain challenges more common to the senior population may inhibit the ability of seniors to access the justice system and related services. These include language and cultural barriers, physical and mental conditions, transportation limitations, and inexperience with or limited access to technology (Government of Canada, n.d.-b).

Family violence against seniors, where the perpetrator is a family member or relative and there is an expected relationship of trust or dependence, can have especially serious consequences for victims (Government of Canada n.d.-a). Senior abuse is best detected by those who interact with seniors and are familiar with what is typical for any given individual. Shared living environments, either at home or in an institutional care facility, can increase the risk for senior abuse. The reliance of seniors on others for living arrangements and caregiving may create stressful conditions for family members and other care providers (Public Health Agency of Canada 2016). Family violence against seniors may go unnoticed by members of the public or police, thus increasing the isolation of victims. Further, as seniors continue to age, their activity outside the home might decrease over time and increase the likelihood that violence against seniors will remain undetected.

Using data from the 2015 Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the 2015 Homicide Survey, this section presents information on police-reported family violence against seniors over the age of 65.[1] The following analysis highlights the prevalence of violent offences against seniors where the perpetrator is a family member. The information includes type of offence, relationship to the perpetrator and geographic location. Trend analysis of select police-reported violent offences against seniors is also presented to indicate changes over time.

The analysis of family violence against seniors includes all types of violent offences under the *Criminal Code* that were reported to police in 2015, ranging from uttering threats to physical and sexual violence to homicide. Non-violent crimes such as theft and fraud, abuses unsubstantiated by police, and other forms of conduct not covered by the *Criminal Code* are not included in this analysis. In addition, analysis based on the Homicide Survey excludes homicides that have not been solved by police. While this section provides important contextual information on the incidence of police-reported family violence, the true extent of offences against seniors in Canada may be underestimated since the data presented here include only incidents of violence that have come to the attention of police and that are covered by the *Criminal Code*.

Unless otherwise specified, all rates in this section are per 100,000 population. Information on data sources, survey methodology and definitions can be found in the 'Survey description' section.

Highlights

Police-reported family violence against seniors most often perpetrated by an extended family member or a grown child

- In 2015, more than 9,900 seniors (65 years and older) were victims of police-reported violent crime in Canada. Of these victims, one-third (33%) were victimized by a grown child, spouse, sibling or extended family member (a rate of 60 per 100,000 population) (Table 5.1).
- Six in ten (60%) senior victims of family violence were female, with a rate 26% higher than that of male seniors (66 versus 52) (Table 5.1).
- Overall, senior victims of police-reported family violence were most likely to have been victimized by an extended family member (30%), a grown child (30%) or a spouse (28%) (Table 5.1).
- Among female senior victims of family violence, one-third (33%) were victimized by a spouse, followed by an extended family member (28%) or a grown child (27%). Among male senior victims of family violence, an extended family member (34%) and a grown child (34%) were the most common perpetrators (Table 5.1).
- More than half (55%) of police-reported family violence incidents against seniors were cleared[2] by the recommendation or laying of a charge against the accused. Another 30% of senior victims, incidents of family violence were cleared by other means, such as a complainant request for charges not be laid (19%). The remaining

16% of incidents of family violence were not cleared because of insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incidents (Table 5.2).

Physical assault most common form of police-reported family violence against seniors

- Common (level 1) assault was the most frequently reported form of family violence against seniors in 2015. This type of offence was experienced by more than half (55%) of seniors victimized by a family member, followed by uttering threats (19%), major assault (levels 2 and 3) (15%) and criminal harassment (4%) (Table 5.3).
- Most senior victims of police-reported family violence were victimized with physical force such as pushing or hitting (61%) or threats (21%). A weapon was present in family violence against 18% of senior victims, against whom a knife (6%) was commonly used, while a firearm was least common (1%) (Table 5.4).
- Two out of five senior victims of police-reported family violence sustained injuries: 39% sustained minor physical injuries that required no professional medical treatment, and 3% sustained major physical injuries that required professional medical attention or that resulted in death. Most (57%) senior victims of this type of injury were female (Table 5.5).

Highest rates of police-reported family violence against seniors in the territories and prairies

- In 2015, as with family violence overall, the territories had the highest rates of police-reported family violence against seniors in Canada. Nunavut (1,933 per 100,000 population) was the territory with the highest rate of family violence against seniors, more than 30 times the national rate (60), followed by the Northwest Territories (1,158) and Yukon (175). Saskatchewan (92), Manitoba (87) and Alberta (83) were the provinces with the highest rates of family violence against seniors, while Prince Edward Island (35) and Ontario (48) had the lowest (Table 5.6).
- While provincial and territorial rates of family violence against female seniors and male seniors were generally similar, there were some exceptions. For instance, in Prince Edward Island, female seniors were three times as likely to have been a victim of family violence compared to male seniors (50 versus 17). The opposite was true in Nunavut and Yukon, where male seniors were around two times as likely to be victimized by a family member (2,471 and 238, respectively) compared to female seniors (1,370 and 106, respectively) (Table 5.6).
- Overall, the rate of family violence against seniors living in CMAs (54) was lower than for those living in non-CMAs (70) (Table 5.7).
- Of the CMAs, Abbotsford–Mission (79) and Saint John (78) had the highest rates of police-reported family violence against seniors, followed by Brantford (74) and Gatineau (72). The lowest rates were reported in Guelph (17) and Barrie (22). Several other CMAs (Ottawa, Regina, Sherbrooke, St. Catharines–Niagara, Peterborough and Greater Sudbury) had rates that were approximately half that of the national rate (Table 5.7).
- In general, the rate of family violence for female seniors compared to male seniors was higher across the CMAs; however, there were some exceptions. Eight CMAs had a higher rate of family violence against male seniors: Gatineau, Barrie, Sherbrooke, Thunder Bay, Trois-Rivières, Windsor, Calgary and Abbotsford–Mission (Table 5.7).

Nearly half of senior victims of family-related homicide killed by a grown child, one-third by a spouse

- In 2015, police-reported physical assault was the most common form of family violence against seniors (a rate of 42 per 100,000 population). For female seniors, the rate of family-related physical assault increased by 2% from 2010 to a rate of 46 in 2015, and the rate against male seniors increased by 7% from 2010 to a rate of 37 in 2015 (Table 5.8).
- In general, the rate of family-related homicide against seniors gradually decreased over the past three decades, and the rates for female and male victims decreased in a similar way. In 2015, the rate was approximately half that of 1985 (3.8 per 1 million population versus 6.8) (Table 5.9).
- According to police records from more recent years, between 2005 and 2015, there were a total of 184 senior victims of family-related homicide. Nearly half (47%) of these victims were killed by a grown child and one-third (34%) were killed by a spouse (Table 5.10).
- Over six in ten (62%) senior victims of family-related homicides between 2005 and 2015 were women. Among female victims, a spouse was most often the perpetrator (49%) compared to 9% of male victims, while among male victims, a grown child was most often the perpetrator (69%) compared to 33% of female victims (Table 5.10).
- Over the past decade, arguments or quarrels (37%) and feelings of frustration, anger or despair (33%) were the most commonly reported motives for family-related homicides against seniors. Frustration, anger or despair was more common for homicides where the victim was a female senior (39%) than a male senior (23%), while an argument or quarrel was more common where the victim was a male senior (47%) than a female senior (31%) (Table 5.11).

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Notes

1. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category.

2. Police can respond to a family violence incident in one of three ways: charge the accused, clear the incident in another way (e.g. through departmental discretion, reasons beyond the control of police department, or complainant request for charges not be laid), or not clear the incident because of insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.

Detailed data tables

Table 5.1
Senior victims of police-reported violent crime, by sex of victim and relationship of accused to victim, Canada, 2015

Relationship of accused to victim	Female victims			Male victims			Total victims		
	number	percent	rate	number	percent	rate	number	percent	rate
Total family	**1,952**	**43**	**66**	**1,328**	**25**	**52**	**3,280**	**33**	**60**
Grown child[1]	536	12	18	446	8	18	982	10	18
Spouse[2]	636	14	22	271	5	11	907	9	17
Sibling[3]	242	5	8	160	3	6	402	4	7
Extended family[4]	538	12	18	451	8	18	989	10	18
Total friends, acquaintances, other	**1,672**	**37**	**57**	**2,422**	**45**	**96**	**4,094**	**41**	**75**
Casual acquaintance[5]	888	20	30	1,187	22	47	2,075	21	38
Neighbour	365	8	12	563	10	22	928	9	17
Business relationship	141	3	5	329	6	13	470	5	9
Dating partner[6]	139	3	5	122	2	5	261	3	5
Friend[7]	139	3	5	221	4	9	360	4	7
Stranger	924	20	31	1,620	30	64	2,544	26	46
Unknown	1	...	...	4	...	...	5	...	...
Total violence against seniors	**4,549**	**100**	**154**	**5,374**	**100**	**212**	**9,923**	**100**	**181**

... not applicable
1. Includes biological, step, adoptive and foster children.
2. Includes current and former legally married and common-law spouses.
3. Includes biological, step, adoptive and foster brothers and sisters.
4. Includes all other family members related by blood, marriage or adoption. Examples include grandchildren, uncles, aunts, cousins and in-laws.
5. Includes criminal relationships, authority figures, and reverse authority figures.
6. Includes girlfriend/boyfriend (current and previous) and other intimate partners.
7. Includes roommates, which was added as a relationship category beginning in 2013.
Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown. Percentages have been calculated excluding victims where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5.2
Senior victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and type of clearance status, Canada, 2015

Type of clearance status	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Not cleared[1]	327	17	186	14	513	16
Cleared by charge	1,079	55	713	54	1,792	55
Cleared otherwise	546	28	429	32	975	30
Complainant requests charges not be laid	327	17	286	22	613	19
Reasons beyond the control of department	61	3	40	3	101	3
Departmental discretion	129	7	87	7	216	7
Other[2]	29	1	16	1	45	1
Total	**1,952**	**100**	**1,328**	**100**	**3,280**	**100**

1. 'Not cleared' refers to incidents where an accused person has not been identified in connection with the incident or incidents where there is insufficient evidence to lay a charge in connection with the incident.
2. 'Cleared by other means' includes suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, accused is less than 12 years of age, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, accused already sentenced, diversionary programs, incident cleared by a lesser statute, incident cleared by other municipal/provincial/federal agency.
Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. In cases of domestic violence, every Canadian jurisdiction has implemented some form of pro-charging policies. The particular parameters of these pro-charging policies can vary regionally.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5.3
Senior victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and type of offence, Canada, 2015

Type of offence	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Violations causing death[1]	13	0.7	10	0.8	23	0.7
Attempted murder[2]	12	0.6	9	0.7	21	0.6
Sexual assault (levels 1, 2, 3)[3]	42	2	1	0.1	43	1
Physical assault	1,376	70	936	70	2,312	70
Major assault (levels 2 and 3)[4]	243	12	249	19	492	15
Common assault (level 1)[5]	1,116	57	678	51	1,794	55
Other assaults[6]	17	0.9	9	0.7	26	0.8
Robbery	8	0.4	18	1	26	0.8
Extortion	14	0.7	6	0.5	20	0.6
Criminal harassment	94	5	35	3	129	4
Uttering threats	340	17	278	21	618	19
Indecent or harassing phone calls	33	2	13	1	46	1
Other violent offences[7]	20	1	22	2	42	1
Total	**1,952**	**100**	**1,328**	**100**	**3,280**	**100**

1. Violations causing death include first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter, infanticide, criminal negligence causing death, and other related violations causing death.
2. Attempted murder includes conspiracy to commit murder.
3. Includes sexual assault, classified as one of three levels according to the seriousness of the incidents. Level 1 sexual assault is the category of least physical injury to the victim; level 2 includes sexual assault with a weapon, threats to use a weapon, or causing bodily harm; and level 3 includes aggravated sexual assault which wounds, maims, disfigures, or endangers the life of the victim.
4. Level 2 assault is defined as assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm and level 3 assault is defined as assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.
5. Level 1 assault is the least serious form of assault and includes pushing, slapping, punching and face-to-face verbal threats.
6. Other assaults include criminal negligence causing bodily harm, pointing a firearm, unlawfully causing bodily harm, using a firearm in commission of an offence and other assaults.
7. Other violent offences include forcible confinement, intimidation of a non-justice system participant, arson—disregard for human life, kidnapping and other violations against the person.

Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5.4
Senior victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and type of weapon present, Canada, 2015

Type of weapon present	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Threats (no weapon)[1]	391	21	265	21	656	21
Physical force	1,166	64	704	57	1,870	61
Weapon	277	15	273	22	550	18
Club or other blunt instrument	38	2	57	5	95	3
Knife or other piercing instrument[2]	75	4	97	8	172	6
Firearm	27	1	19	2	46	1
Other weapon[3]	137	7	100	8	237	8
Unknown	118	...	86	...	204	...
Total	**1,952**	**100**	**1,328**	**100**	**3,280**	**100**

... not applicable
1. Includes threats that are construed to imply that death or injury is possible.
2. Includes other piercing/cutting instruments, such as a hatchet, razor blade or arrow.
3. Includes other types of weapons such as explosives, fire, motor vehicles, poison and weapons not otherwise classified.

Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages have been calculated excluding unknown type of weapon. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5.5
Senior victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and level of injury, Canada, 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Level of injury	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
No injury[1]	1,121	60	711	56	1,832	59
Minor physical injury[2]	687	37	525	41	1,212	39
Major physical injury or death[3]	48	3	36	3	84	3
Unknown	96	...	56	...	152	...
Total	**1,952**	**100**	**1,328**	**100**	**3,280**	**100**

... not applicable
1. Includes incidents that did not involve the use of weapons or physical force as well as those in which no visible injuries were noted by police.
2. Refers to injuries that required no professional medical treatment or only some first aid (e.g., bandage, ice).
3. Refers to injuries that required professional medical attention at the scene or transportation to a medical facility, or injuries that resulted in death.
Note: Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages have been calculated excluding unknown injuries. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5.6
Senior victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and province or territory, 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Province or territory	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Newfoundland and Labrador	35	70	30	68	65	69
Prince Edward Island	7	50	2	17	9	35
Nova Scotia	58	63	34	43	92	54
New Brunswick	57	78	48	75	105	77
Quebec	471	63	320	51	791	57
Ontario	625	55	378	39	1,003	48
Manitoba	88	92	66	81	154	87
Saskatchewan	75	90	68	95	143	92
Alberta	225	91	162	75	387	83
British Columbia	283	70	181	49	464	60
Yukon	2	106	5	238	7	175
Northwest Territories	17	1,144	17	1,172	34	1,158
Nunavut	9	1,370	17	2,471	26	1,933
Canada	**1,952**	**66**	**1,328**	**52**	**3,280**	**60**

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5.7
Senior victims of police-reported family violence, by sex of victim and census metropolitan area, 2015

Census metropolitan area (CMA)[1, 2]	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
St. John's	8	51	5	40	13	46
Halifax	13	40	10	38	23	39
Moncton	12	89	3	27	15	61
Saint John	11	98	5	54	16	78
Saguenay	7	41	5	34	12	38
Québec	58	73	23	37	81	57
Sherbrooke	5	25	6	37	11	31
Trois-Rivières	7	39	7	49	14	43
Montréal	231	68	140	52	371	61
Gatineau[3]	13	57	17	89	30	72
Ottawa[4]	31	41	9	14	40	29
Kingston	8	52	4	32	12	43
Peterborough	5	37	3	27	8	33
Toronto[5]	250	62	154	46	404	55
Hamilton[6]	19	40	13	33	32	37
St. Catharines–Niagara	16	34	12	30	28	32
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	28	72	14	43	42	59
Brantford	11	95	5	50	16	74
Guelph	3	30	0	0	3	17
London	20	46	10	29	30	38
Windsor	13	49	13	59	26	54
Barrie	2	13	4	33	6	22
Greater Sudbury	8	53	1	8	9	33
Thunder Bay	6	51	6	61	12	55
Winnipeg	36	59	17	34	53	48
Regina	6	36	3	23	9	30
Saskatoon	8	41	5	32	13	37
Calgary	43	55	39	59	82	57
Edmonton	65	79	39	56	104	68
Kelowna	10	49	8	44	18	47
Abbotsford–Mission	11	77	10	80	21	79
Vancouver	125	66	70	42	195	54
Victoria	26	71	6	19	32	47
CMA total[7]	**1,143**	**61**	**685**	**44**	**1,828**	**54**
Non-CMA total	**809**	**74**	**643**	**65**	**1,452**	**70**
Canada	**1,952**	**66**	**1,328**	**52**	**3,280**	**60**

1. A CMA consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA typically comprises more than one police service.
2. CMA populations have been adjusted to follow policing boundaries. The Oshawa CMA is excluded from this table due to the incongruity between the police service jurisdictional boundaries and the CMA boundaries.
3. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
4. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
5. Excludes the portions of Halton Regional Police and Durham Regional Police that police the CMA of Toronto.
6. Excludes the portion of Halton Regional Police that polices the CMA of Hamilton.
7. Includes Halton Regional Police and Durham Regional Police, which are responsible for policing more than one CMA. This total also includes the portion of Durham Regional Police that polices the Oshawa CMA. Because of these inclusions, the CMA total will not equal the total of the individual CMAs.

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family violence refers to violence committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5.8
Senior victims of police-reported family-related physical assault, by sex of victim, Canada, 2009 to 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Year	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
2009	997	41	729	37	1,726	39
2010	1,142	46	711	35	1,853	41
2011	1,132	44	729	34	1,861	40
2012	1,195	45	767	34	1,962	40
2013	1,164	42	825	35	1,989	39
2014	1,271	45	910	37	2,181	41
2015	1,362	46	932	37	2,294	42

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family-related physical assault refers to physical assault committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and extended family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 to 89 years. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Based on the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database, which includes data from 99% of police services in Canada. As a result, the rates may not match totals presented elsewhere in the report.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Trend Database.

Table 5.9
Senior victims of family-related homicide, by sex of victim, Canada, 1985 to 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Year	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
1985	11	7.2	7	6.3	18	6.8
1986	5	3.1	6	5.2	11	4.0
1987	17	10.3	11	9.3	28	9.9
1988	7	4.1	5	4.1	12	4.1
1989	8	4.5	5	4.0	13	4.3
1990	14	7.7	8	6.1	22	7.0
1991	9	4.8	5	3.7	14	4.4
1992	5	2.6	1	0.7	6	1.8
1993	4	2.0	1	0.7	5	1.5
1994	5	2.5	7	4.8	12	3.5
1995	5	2.5	4	2.7	9	2.6
1996	10	4.8	7	4.6	17	4.7
1997	9	4.3	8	5.2	17	4.7
1998	7	3.3	8	5.0	15	4.0
1999	9	4.1	7	4.3	16	4.2
2000	7	3.2	3	1.8	10	2.6
2001	12	5.4	7	4.2	19	4.8
2002	17	7.5	7	4.1	24	6.0
2003	7	3.0	5	2.8	12	3.0
2004	14	6.0	5	2.8	19	4.6
2005	15	6.3	8	4.4	23	5.5
2006	10	4.1	5	2.7	15	3.5
2007	12	4.8	6	3.1	18	4.1
2008	6	2.4	6	3.0	12	2.6
2009	6	2.3	2	1.0	8	1.7
2010	11	4.1	4	1.9	15	3.1
2011	12	4.4	5	2.3	17	3.4
2012	12	4.2	5	2.2	17	3.3
2013	7	2.4	10	4.1	17	3.2
2014	11	3.6	9	3.6	20	3.6
2015	12	3.8	10	3.8	22	3.8

Note: Rates are calculated on the basis of 1 million population. Populations based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Family-related homicide refers to homicide committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and other family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 years and over. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 5.10
Senior victims of family-related homicide, by sex of victim and relationship of accused to victim, Canada, 2005 to 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Relationship of accused to victim	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Grown child[1]	38	33	48	69	86	47
Spouse[2]	56	49	6	9	62	34
Other family[3]	20	18	16	23	36	20
Total	**114**	**100**	**70**	**100**	**184**	**100**

1. Includes biological, step, adoptive and foster children.
2. Includes current and former legally married and common-law spouses.
3. Includes all other family members related by blood, marriage or adoption. Examples include siblings, grandchildren, uncles, aunts, cousins and in-laws.
Note: Family-related homicide refers to homicide committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and other family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 years and over. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 5.11
Senior victims of family-related homicide, by sex of victim and type of motive, Canada, 2005 to 2015

	Female victims		Male victims		Total victims	
Type of motive	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Frustration, anger or despair	41	39	15	23	56	33
Argument or quarrel	32	31	30	47	62	37
No apparent motive[1]	13	13	9	14	22	13
Financial gain[2]	4	4	3	5	7	4
Mercy killing or assisted suicide	9	9	1	2	10	6
Revenge	1	1	3	5	4	2
Jealousy	3	3	1	2	4	2
Other[3]	1	1	2	3	3	2
Unknown	10	...	6	...	16	...
Total	**114**	**100**	**70**	**100**	**184**	**100**

... not applicable
1. Includes, for example, mental illness and dementia.
2. Includes, for example, robberies and homicides committed to obtain insurance monies or inheritances.
3. Includes, for example, fear of apprehension, sexual violence, personal protection and settling of gang or drug-related accounts.
Note: Family-related homicide refers to homicide committed by spouses (legally married, separated, divorced and common-law partners), parents (biological, adopted, step, foster), children (biological, adopted, step, foster), siblings (biological, adopted, step, half, foster), and other family members. Senior victims refer to those aged 65 years and over. Excludes victims of unsolved homicides, and victims where the sex or the age was unknown or where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Percentages have been calculated excluding unknown motives. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Survey description

General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization)

This report is based on Cycle 28 of the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) conducted in 2014. In 2014, Statistics Canada conducted the victimization cycle of the GSS for the sixth time. Previous cycles were conducted in the Canadian provinces in 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004 and 2009. The 2014 survey on victimization was also conducted in Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut using a different sampling design. The GSS on victimization had also been conducted in the territories in 2009 and was preceded by test collections in 1999 and 2004.

The purpose of the survey is to provide data on Canadians' personal experiences with eight offences, examine the risk factors associated with victimization, examine rates of reporting to the police, assess the nature and extent of spousal violence, measure fear of crime, and examine public perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system. The target population was persons aged 15 and older living in the Canadian provinces and territories.

Once a household was selected and contacted by phone, an individual 15 years or older was randomly selected to respond to the survey. An oversample of immigrants and youth was added to the 2014 GSS for a more detailed analysis of these groups.

In 2014, the provincial sample size was 33,127 respondents. Of that number, 2,787 were from the oversample. The territorial sample size was 2,040 respondents.

Data collection

Data collection differed between the provinces and territories. In the provinces, data collection took place from January to December 2014 inclusively. Responses were obtained by computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). Respondents were able to respond in the official language of their choice.

In the territories, data collection took place from August 2014 to January 2015 inclusively. The method of collection was a mixture of telephone (CATI) and personal interviews (CAPI). Most cases started as CATI at the regional office and could be transferred to a CAPI interviewer depending on the community and collection constraints. Respondents were interviewed in the official language of their choice.

Response rates

In the provinces, the overall response rate was 52.9%, down from 61.6% in 2009. Non-respondents included people who refused to participate, could not be reached, or could not speak English or French. Respondents in the sample were weighted so that their responses represent the non-institutionalized Canadian provinces population aged 15 and older.

In the territories, the overall response rate was 58.7%, up from 50.7% in 2009. Non-respondents included people who refused to participate, could not be reached, or could not speak English or French. Respondents in the sample were weighted so that their responses represent the non-institutionalized territories population aged 15 and older.

Data limitations

As with any household survey, there are some data limitations. The results are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling errors. Somewhat different results might have been obtained if the entire population had been surveyed. This article uses the coefficient of variation (CV) as a measure of the sampling error. Estimates with a high CV (over 33.3%) were not published because they were too unreliable. In these cases, the symbol "F" is used in place of an estimate in the figures and data tables. Estimates with a CV between 16.6 and 33.3 should be used with caution and the symbol "E" is used. Where descriptive statistics and cross-tabular analyses were used, statistically significant differences were determined using 95% confidence intervals.

Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey

The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey collects detailed information on criminal incidents that have come to the attention of, and have been substantiated by Canadian police services. Information includes characteristics pertaining to incidents (weapon, location), victims (age, sex, accused-victim relationship) and accused persons (age, sex). In 2015, data from police services covered 99% of the population of Canada. The count for a particular year represents incidents reported in that year, regardless of when the incident actually occurred.

The UCR Trend Database (2009 to 2015) represents 99% of police services in Canada. Analysis of this six-year trend database is limited to only those offences that have complete victim records and where UCR offence classification has remained constant over the six-year period. For the purpose of this *Juristat* article, the offences included in the trend analysis include attempted murder, physical assault (levels 1, 2, and 3) and sexual assault (levels 1, 2, and 3).

Homicide Survey

The Homicide Survey collects detailed information on all homicides that have come to the attention of, and have been substantiated by, Canadian police services. Information includes characteristics pertaining to incidents (weapon, location), victims (age, sex, accused-victim relationship), and accused persons (age, sex). Coverage for the Homicide Survey has represented 100% of the population since recording began in 1961. The count for a particular year represents all homicides reported in that year, regardless of when the death actually occurred.

Definitions

Assault (physical): refers to three levels of physical assaults which include the following categories:

- **Common assault:** this includes the *Criminal Code* category assault (level 1). This is the least serious form of assault and includes pushing, slapping, punching, and face-to-face verbal threats.
- **Major assault level 2:** this includes more serious forms of assault, i.e. assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm and involves carrying, using or threatening to use a weapon against someone or causing someone bodily harm.
- **Major assault level 3:** this includes aggravated assault and involves wounding, maiming, disfiguring or endangering the life of someone.
- **Other assaults:** includes pointing a firearm, unlawfully causing bodily harm, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, using firearm or imitation firearm in commission of offence, discharge firearm with intent, assault police officer, assault against peace officer with a weapon or causing bodily harm, aggravated assault against peace officer, trap likely to or causing bodily harm, and other assaults.

Attempted murder: attempt by any means, including conspiracy, to commit murder.
Census metropolitan area (CMA): consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA typically comprises more than one police service.
Childhood maltreatment: physical and/or sexual abuse by someone aged 18 or older, and/or witnessing violence by a parent or guardian against another adult, before age 15.
Childhood physical abuse: one or more of the following experiences before age 15:

- Having been slapped or hit with something hard enough to have been hurt.
- Having been pushed, grabbed, or shoved.
- Having been kicked, bitten, punch, choked, burned or otherwise attacked.

Childhood sexual abuse: one or more of the following experiences before age 15:

- Having been touched, grabbed, kissed or fondled in a sexual way.
- Having been forced into unwanted sexual activity by being threatened, held down or hurt.

Criminal harassment: is defined as repeatedly following another person from place to place or repeatedly attempting to contact the person against their wishes causing that person to reasonably fear for their personal safety or the safety of anyone known to them.
Family and non-family: the nature of the relationship between the victim and the accused is determined by establishing the identity of the accused relative to the victim. Family members include spouses, children, siblings, parents or other persons related to the victim by blood, marriage or another legal relationship (e.g. adoption). All other relationships are considered to be non-family.
Homicide: includes first and second degree murder, manslaughter and infanticide. Deaths caused by criminal negligence, suicide, accidental or justifiable homicides are not included in this classification.
Intimate partner violence: violence committed by spouses and dating partners, that is violence committed within an intimate relationship. This category includes victims aged 15 to 89.
Major injuries: are those that require professional medical treatment or immediate transportation to a medical facility.
Minor injuries: are defined as those that do not require professional medical treatment or only some first aid.
Non-intimate partner violence: violence committed by a family member (parent, child, other immediate or extended family member), a friend, an acquaintance, an associate (in business or in a criminal relationship), an authority figure, a neighbour or a stranger. Includes victims under 90 years of age.
Older adults and seniors: are used interchangeably in this report and refer to Canadians aged 65 years or older. Victims aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category.

Sexual assault: encompasses a wide range of criminal acts in the *Criminal Code* of Canada. Such conduct ranges from unwanted sexual touching to sexual violence resulting in serious physical injury or disfigurement to the victim. It also includes special categories of offences designed to protect children from sexual abuse:

- **Sexual assault level 1:** involves minor physical injuries or no injuries to the victim.
- **Sexual assault level 2:** includes sexual assault with a weapon, threats or causing bodily harm.
- **Aggravated sexual assault level 3:** this results in wounding, maiming, disfiguring or endangering the life of the victim.
- **Sexual interference:** is the direct or indirect touching (for a sexual purpose) of a person under the age of 16 years using a part of the body or an object.
- **Invitation to sexual touching:** is the inviting, counselling, or inciting of a person under the age of 16 years to touch (for a sexual purpose) the body of any person directly or indirectly with a part of the body or with an object.
- **Sexual exploitation:** occurs when a person in a position of trust or authority towards a young person or a person with whom the young person is in a relationship of dependency, commits sexual interference or invitation to sexual touching. In this section "young person" refers to a person between 16 and 18 years of age.
- **Sexual exploitation of a person with a disability**
- **Incest:** occurs when an individual has sexual intercourse with a person that has a known defined blood relationship with them.
- **Anal intercourse**
- **Bestiality:** commit/compel/incite a person.
- **Corrupting children**
- **Making sexually explicit material available to children**
- **Luring a child via a computer**
- **Voyeurism**

Spouse: the husband or wife through marriage or common-law and includes same-sex partners. Where indicated, separated and/or divorced spouses are also included in this category. The separated or divorced category includes the former husband or wife (by marriage or by common law relationship) who is separated or divorced at the time of the criminal incident.
Spousal violence: violence committed against a spouse (married or common-law) or an ex-spouse (from a marriage or common-law relationship).